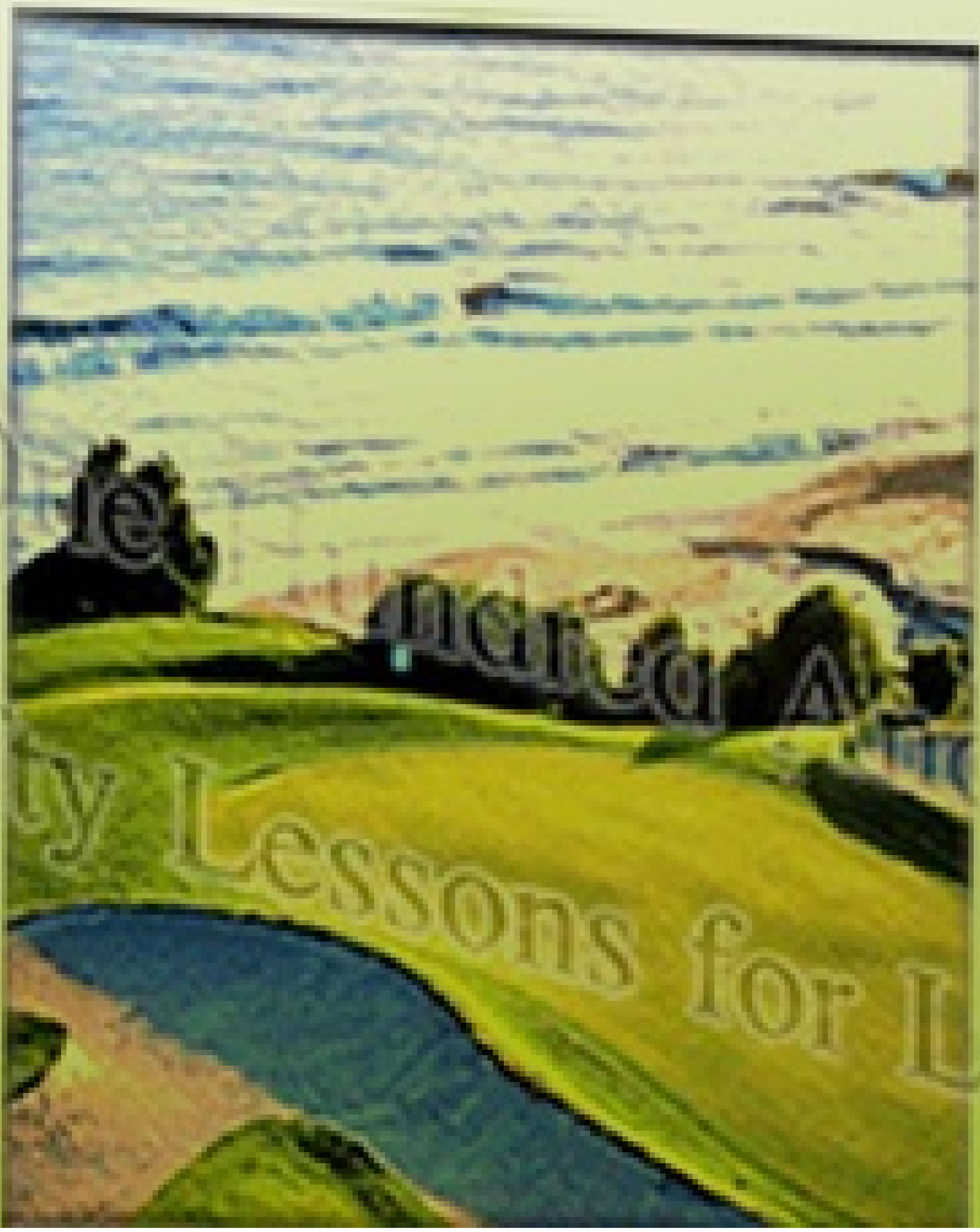
On Hundred And Fifty Lessons for Life



بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

One Hundred And Fifty Lessons for Life

:Writer

Naser Makarem Shirazi

:Published in print

Madrese-ye Imam Ali ibn-e Abitaleb

:Digital Publisher

Ghaemiyeh center of computerized researches

Contents

One Hundred And Fifty Lessons for Life

Introduction

I dedicate this work sincerely to my parents, Zahra and Abolfazl, who did not spare .any effort to help me succeed

I also thank my husband, Reza Mohammad Husaini, who provided encouragement .and help in all stages of my work

I appreciate the valuable assistance of Mr . Ruin Naddaf in reviewing and editing this .translation

It is my earnest wish that this book would serve as a good reference for clarifying the .attitudes of Islam towards different issues in this world and the hereafter

All success comes from Allah

Monir Shafiei ١٠ . ١٢ . ٢٠٠٠

Contents of this book

In the name of God, the Beneficient, the Merciful

Our greatest treasures of knowledge after the divine book, the holy quran, are the practices of the prophet (s . a . w . a .) and the valuable traditions of the household of the prophet (s . a) . These are the weighty things available to us after the demise of the prophet (s . a . w . a .) . Adherence to them prevents man from misguidance and .error

Unfortunately, these traditions which are an ocean of sciences and knowledge are not well known yet . There are many traditions which in one short phrase speak volumes in terms of useful lessons that can solve the problems of today�s man in many .different areas of life

This book is a selection of these traditions together with a translation and a brief description . It all started with the Friday weekly interpretation discussion meetings of

of Religion and Science in the Imam Husain Masjid, Tehran . A tradition was selected and everybody practised it throughout the week as a lesson and many boys and girls also memorized it . The traditions were so well received that it was decided to publish them . This small book serves as a sample of Islam�s attributes for those who want to know Islam better through a short study . What is even more important in appreciating their worth is the practicing of these programs in our lives . So let us pray to God for success in understanding these traditions and then for being able to act on . them

Qum, Naaser Makarim Shirazi, ١٩٧۶

Lesson One

Thinking, reflection, meditation

اَلاَ لاَ خَيْرَ فِىْ عِلْمٍ لَيْسَ فِيْهِ تَفَهُّمٌ، اَلاَ لاَ خَيْرَ فِىْ قَرَآئَهٍ لَيْسَ فِيْهَا تَدَبُّرٌ، اَلاَ لاَ خَيْرَ فِىْ عِبَادَهٍ لَيْسَ فِيْهَا تَفَكَّرٌ

Be aware ! Knowledge without thinking has no profit ! Be aware ! Recitation of the Quran without reflection is of little use ! Be aware ! Worship lacking meditation has no [effect ! [١

Brief description

Filling the brain with scientific formulas, logical rules and philosophical principles and other knowledge has little effect if it is not based on proper reflection, clear world- . view and familiarity with fundamentals of man�s life

Reciting holy verses of the Quran has little effect when it is not accompanied by meditation and thinking about them . Similarly, other forms of worship devoid of the light of thinking and wisdom are like a spiritless body and unable to impart their high

. educational value

Lesson Two

Measure of deliberation

: Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says

صَلاَحُ حَالِ التَّعَايُشِ وَ التَّعَاشُرِ مِلاَمِكْيَال ثُلْثَاهُ فِطْنَةٌ وَ ثُلْثُهُ تَغَافُلٌ

Improving the situation of life and association is possible through using a measure, [two thirds of which is vigilance and one third of which is negligence . [٢

Brief description

No work project can be started without proper study, planning and vigilance, and yet a project cannot be completed in a timely manner without some bold decisions based on intuition, experience or outright risk-taking . In other words, if we dive into endeavours without careful investigation, feasibility studies and work plans, we will not succeed . But this does not mean that we get bogged down for months and years in trying to tie up all loose ends and going into unnecessary details to cover all possible uncertainties . In most cases, time is of essence for a successful outcome . Hence the need to balance the vigilance for most parts (two-third) with some non-vigilance or . (expediency (for the remaining one third

Lesson Three

. . . They are strict about body�s food but

: Imam Hasan (a . s .) says

عَجِبْتُ لِمَنْ يَتَفَكَّرُ فِىْ مَأكُوْلِه كَيْفَ لاَ يَتَفَكَّرُ فِىْ مَعْقُوْلِه، فَيَجَنَّبُ بَطْنَهُ مَا يُؤْذِيْهِ وَ يُوْدِعُ صَدْرَهُ مَا يُرْدِيْهِ

I wonder about those who think about their body�s food, but do not think about their soul�s food . They keep undesirable food away from their belly, but fill up their heart [with destructive subjects . [٣

Brief description

As our great imam has said, our people are usually quite careful

with their food and do not start eating unless they know what it is . They avoid anything that looks doubtful and some go to great lengths to ensure that the body .receives good, clean, healthy diet

Yet, when it comes to the food for the soul, these same individuals will throw caution to the winds . With eyes closed, unaware of the reality, they would have no hesitation in pouring down any mental food into their soul . They harm their souls by accepting without question the speeches of unsuitable friends, misleading press reports and .suspicious or poisonous propagation, and this is very surprising

Lesson Four

Role of the pen

:Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says

مَا رَاَيْتُ بَاكِيًا اَحْسَنَ تَبَسُّمًا مِنَ الْقَلَمِ

[I have not seen any weeper nicely smiling like a pen . [۴

Brief description

.Pen divulges the feelings and interprets the wisdom of man

Pen is founder of civilizations and rotates the wheels of society . Pen conveys the worries and pain of man through its continuous weeping . It can at the same time brighten the landscape with its smile when it touches upon life�s beauty and love, .desire for life and its mysteries

But it is regretful that when this pen is in hands of an incompetent person, its tears will .change to drops of blood, and its smile is a snicker on the utmost human credits

Lesson Five

Between two great responsibilities

:Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says

اَلْمُؤْمِنُ بَيْنَ مَخافَتَيْنِ: ذَنْبٌ قَدْ مَضٰى لاَ يَدْرِىْ مَا صُنْعُ اللهُ فِيْهِ وَ عُمْرٌ بَقِىَ لاَ يَدْرِىْ مَا يَكْتَسِبُ فِيْهِ

A faithful believer is always anxious concerning two things : for his past sins and how God will treat him for these sins; and for his remaining life and the uncertainty about how he will spend it . [۵]

Brief description

The most manifest sign of belief is feeling responsibility, both for what has transpired and for the duties and obligations that should be fulfilled.

Those who possess these two feelings will always think about compensation for past negligence, as well as finding the best possible way for using future opportunities . These thoughts are instrumental in the continuous development and

progress of a man or a nation . The ones who are oblivious of their past mistakes and . have no intention or plan to improve the future lead a poor and miserable life

Lesson Six

Causes for destruction of a society

اَرْبَعٌ لاَ يَدْخُلُ بَيْتًا وَاحِدَهٌ مِنْهَا اِلاَّ خَرِبَ وَ لَمْ يَعْمُرْ بِالْبَرَكَهِ: اَلْخِيَانَهُ وَ السَّرِقَهُ وَ شُرْبُ الْخَمْرُ وَ الزِّنَا

If any one of the following four things enters a home, it will ruin the home and divine [blessing does not re-establish it : treachery, larceny, drinking, and adultery . [۶

Brief description

. This is true for homes as well as for the entire society

. When treachery penetrates into a society, the spirit of confidence disappears

And when larceny, in its different forms, appears therein, peace will not be found . anymore

And when alcohol drinking becomes popular among people, they will have weak . thoughts, disabled children and useless youth

And when they are stained with adultery, the foundation of families will be weakened . and their next generation will be mischievous

Lesson Seven

Indolence and poverty

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

اِنَّ الاَشْيَآءَ لَمَّا ازْدَوَجَتْ اِزْدَوَجَ الْكَسَلُ وَ الْعَجْزُ فَنَتَجَا بَيْنَهُمَا الْفَقْرَ

The day in which everything married with one another, �indolence� and �weakness� mingled with each other, and their child was called �poverty and [indigence� . [۷

Brief description

Everything is earned through effort and endeavor . This is a reality that Islam has . taught us

Indolence, debility, weakness and escaping from hard work and difficult challenges . are never compatible with the spirit of belief

They will produce nothing but poverty in all aspects, including economic, moral and spiritual poverty . The striving believers on the other hand shall be self-sufficient and . contented in all respects

Lesson Eight

Rain of knowledge on hearts

: Luqman, the wise, said

يَا بُنَيَّ اِنَّ اللهَ يَحْيِيْ الْقُلُوْبَ بِنُوْرِ الْحِكْمَهِ كَمَا يَحْيِيْ الاَرْضَ بِوَابِلِ السَّمَآءِ

My son ! God revives the hearts of men with the light of knowledge as he revives dead [lands with blessings of rains from the sky ! [٨

Brief description

The land of man�s heart is like a garden in which all types of seedlings, seeds of flowers, plants and strong trees are dispersed . If it is irrigated on time, a pleasant and . fruitful area will blossom

The only means of irrigation for this land is the reviving drops of rain of science and knowledge . Hearts lacking knowledge have no light, no fruit� . they are dark, and . they are dead

We should always, and in all conditions, keep alive our souls with the light of . knowledge

Lesson Nine

Source of arrogance

: Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says

مَا مِنْ رَجُلٍ تَجَبَّرَ اَوْ تَكَبَّرَ اِلاَّ لِذِلَّهٍ يَجِدُهَا فِيْ نَفْسِه

[No one boasts to others unless he harbours a feeling of inferiority in himself ! [٩

Brief description

Recent psychological and psychoanalytic research has proved that arrogance and boasting is nothing other than an inferiority complex . Those who suffer from it resort to this malpractice of magnifying themselves artificially to compensate for their deficiencies . By doing so, they only add to their inferiority and dislike in the eyes of . their community

So clearly evident is this from Imam�s saying . The faithful people are always . modest before others due to their internal dignity

Lesson Ten

Three worthy things before God

: Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) says

ثَلاثٌ تَخْرُقُ الْحُجُبَ وَ تَنْتَهِيْ اِلَى مَا بَيْنَ يَدَيِ اللهِ صَرِيْرُ اَقْلَامِ الْعُلَمَآءِ، وَ وَطْى اَقْدَامِ الْمُجَاهِدِيْنَ، وَ صَوْتُ مَغَازِلِ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ

There are three things that remove the veils and approach God�s dignity : The sound of the movement of scientists� pen when writing ! The sound of the paces of warriors in the cause of religion in the battle field ! And the sound of the spinning [wheel of chaste women ! [١٠

Brief description

What a strange and meaningful interpretation ! There are three voices which penetrate into the depths of existence and their vibrations reach up to the everlasting nature of the world and approach God�s dignity : voice of knowledge and pen,

although it may be low and slow, voice of holy war and

self-sacrifice, and voice of attempt, endeavor and work although it may be seemingly .small

And actually, these three things, knowledge, holy war, and work constitute the .foundation of an honorable human community

Lesson Eleven

(.Martyrdom of Husain (a.s

:Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says

اِنَّ لِقَتْلِ الْحُسَيْنِ حَرَارَةٌ فِىْ قُلُوْبِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ لَنْ تَبْرُدَ اَبَدًا

Martyrdom of Imam Husain (a.s.) creates a fire and heat in the hearts of believers [which will never be extinguished.[١١

Brief description

There have been a lot of bloody wars in the world which have faded from memory with time and are forgotten over the years. However, the self-sacrifice of those who offered their lives in the way of God and for freedom of men and honor and virtue, shall not be forgotten because God, freedom, honor and virtue do not get old. Imam .Husain (a.s.) and his companions were the pioneers of the martyrs for faith

Lesson Twelve

Two signs of a real Muslim

:Islam�s Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says

لاَ تَنْظُرُوْا اِلَى كَثْرَهِ صَلاَتِهِمْ وَ صَوْمِهِمْ وَ كَثْرَهِ الْحَجِّ وَ الْمَعْرُوْفِ وَ طَنْطَنَتِهِمْ بِاللَّيْلِ وَ لٰكِنْ اُنْظُرُوْا اِلى صِدْقِ الْحَدِيْثِ وَ اَدَآءِ الاَمَانَهِ

Do not respect only the excess of prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, righteousness with others and vigil of some people (although they are important in their own right). [Rather, consider their �honesty� and �trustworthiness�![١٢

Brief description

A study of Islam clearly establishes this fact that the two decisive signs of a real Muslim are that he is honest and trustworthy . Performance of prayers, fasting and pilgrimage etc are certainly important and carry a high educational value but they

are not a conclusive proof of a true Muslim . To complete the picture, a true Muslim . must possess honesty and trustworthiness

Lesson Thirteen

Fire of anger

: Imam Baqer (a . s .) says

اِنَّ هٰذَا الْغَضَبَ جَمْرَةٌ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تُوْقَدُ فِىْ قَلْبِ ابْنِ آدَمَ

Anger and wrath are the burning flame of fire which is kindled inside man�s heart by [Satan . [١٣

Brief description

When an angry man performs something or makes a decision, in most cases he will later regret and feel sorry because burning fire of anger causes him to disregard his wisdom and intellect . The nervous system and muscles may cause him to inflict . irreversible damage

We should control and extinguish this satanic flame with utmost precision and speed . Once anger turns into uncontrollable rage, it would be too late to prevent it from . burning and ruining our and others� lives

Lesson Fourteen

Source of wealth

: Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) said

اُطْلُبُوْا الرِّزْقَ فِىْ خَبَايَا الاَرْضِ

[Seek for your sustenance in the depth of earth . [١۴

Brief description

This instruction was issued by Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) at a time when the

importance of mines and other resources underneath the earth was not known . Such instructions illustrate the richness of knowledge imparted to us by Islam as well as its emphasis on making efforts to search far and wide so as to exploit for our benefit the abundant natural resources including the ones hidden in the depths of the earth .

Lesson Fifteen

The worst profession

Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) said :

شرُّ الْمَکَاسِبِ کَسْبُ الرِّبَا

Prophet (s . a . w . a .) said : the worst profession is one which is mingled with usury .

Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says :

اِذَا اَرَادَ اللّهُ بِقَوْمٍ هَلَاکًا ظَهَرَ فِيْهِمُ الرِّبَا

When God wills to perish a nation, usury becomes manifest among them . [۱۵]

Brief description

Despite the brisk market of usurers in the present world and special dependence of this world on usury in different forms, it is evident that usury destroys financial and economic system of societies and results in the terrible consequence of accumulation of wealth in the hands of a limited number of people and institutions . This unfair distribution of wealth is the source of many misfortunes and rampant moral corruption all over the world .

Lesson Sixteen

Mastership and captivity

Imam Ali (a . s .) says :

تَفَضَّلْ عَلٰى مَنْ شِئْتَ تَكُنْ اَمِيْرَهُ، وَ اسْتَغْنِ عَمَّنْ شِئْتَ تَكُنْ نَظِيْرَهُ، وَ افْتَقِرْ اِلٰى مَنْ شِئْتَ تَكُنْ اَسِيْرَهُ

If you do favour for someone, you will become his master ! If you are not in need of someone, you will be at par with him ! If you are in need of someone, you will become his captive !

Brief description

This rule powerfully governs the social relations of individuals and nations . Bountiful hands are always masters and begging hands are always slaves . The needy people and nations have effectively made themselves into slaves through looking to others to provide for their

needs . A true Muslim is one who attempts to base his relations with others on mutual, not one-sided, assistance . Receiving gratuitous support should be limited to weak and feeble persons .

Lesson Seventeen

Hypocrisy and affectation

Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says:

لاَ تُرَّاءِ بِعَمَلِكَ مَنْ لاَ يُحْيِيْ وَ لاَ يُمِيْتُ وَ لاَ يُغْنِيْ عَنْكَ شَيْئًا

Do not do your good deeds for affectation and trying to impress people . You should realise that people have no power on life or death nor can they solve any problem for you . [۱۶]

Brief description

All appearances of the life of those who have gotten used to pretension and hypocrisy become hollow and empty . They are contented with aspects of life that have little substance and spiritual meaning, leaning instead towards vain imaginations, illusions and empty religious rituals . They gain nothing save appearances ! For this reason, Islam strongly criticizes this ugly attribute and says that your destiny in not under control of these people, so why this facade ?

Lesson Eighteen

Envy

Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says:

اَلْحَاسِدُ مُضِرٌّ بِنَفْسِه قَبْلَ اَنْ يُضِرَّ بِالْمَحْسُوْدِ

An envious person sustains a loss to himself before causing a loss to the one he envies . [۱۷]

Brief description

The spirit of envy refers to not tolerating others enjoying a blessing, and trying to deprive them from that blessing, or causing a loss to them in other ways.

An envious person�s tendency is to act as a destructive force, seeking failure of others, rather than a constructive force that seeks one�s own improvement and success.

Envy is a severe moral disease . Psychologists assert that feelings of resentment and jealousy harboured by the envious persons play havoc with their emotional and physical health and their

actions bring suffering and humiliation only to themselves . Therefore, it is far better . to concentrate on one�s own success as opposed to trying to hold others back

Lesson Nineteen

Those deprived from Allah�s mercy

: Commander of the Believers (a . s .) says

مَنْ وَجَدَ مَآءً وَ تُرَابًا فَافْتَقَرَ فَاَبْعَدَهُ اللهُ

Whoever has available water and land, and still he is poor and needy, should expect to [be deprived from God�s mercy ! [۱۸

Brief description

It is clearly deduced from Islamic traditions that Moslems throughout the world should use all the availableresources such as animal husbandry, agriculture, underground resources and mines, professions, industry and commerce for alleviating poverty . With hard work and good governance, a nation that has even one of these resources should be able to fulfill its economic requirements . Those who remain needy despite access to many resources will be deprived of God�s mercy . . Becoming needy and dependant on others is against the teachings and spirit of Islam

Lesson Twenty

The worst friends

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

شَرُّ اِخْوَانِکَ مَنْ دَاهَنَکَ فِیْ نَفْسِکَ وَ سَاتَرَکَ عَیْبَکَ

Your worst friends are those who flatter and talk with you glibly and conceal your [faults . [۱۹

Brief description

Escaping the realities and concealing the truths neither solves any problem nor is it a service to anybody . Therefore, friends who refrain from constructive criticism and from urging corrective actions and, instead, hide their friend�s faults for his false satisfaction, or misrepresent it as goodness, have failed to be faithful in friendship . Not only that, they have also committed a great treachery that may cause serious .damage to the prestige, reputation, honor and prosperity of their friend

Lesson Twenty One

Completion of work

:Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) says

اِسْتِتْمامُ الْمَعْرُوْفِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ اِبْتِدائِه

Completion and continuation of a good deed is better and more important than [commencing it . [۲۰

Brief description

We often see useful projects and actions in the milieu of our social life which are left uncompleted . Their doers have started them under the influence of a sudden motive, .but they have lost their enthusiasm very soon and have left them uncompleted

Islam admires faithful and diligent individuals who accomplish the useful work which .they commence

Lesson Twenty Two

Everlasting programs

:Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says

اِنَّ اللهَ لَمْ يَبْعَثْ نَبِيًّا اِلاَّ بِصِدْقِ الْحَدِيْثِ وَ اَدَاءِ الْاَمَانَهِ

[Allah instructed all prophets to invite people to honesty and trust . [۲۱

Brief description

A healthy society is based on a number of core values, the most important of which is the priceless asset of public confidence and trust.

This is when the spoken word and actions take place in an environment of mutual trust. The greatest enemy of this valuable treasure is lies and treachery.

In the societies in which lies and treachery are popular, people are afraid of each other, people feel lonely, not knowing who to turn to and end up bearing a heavy load of life alone.

This is the reason why invitation to honesty and trust has always been included in programs of all the divine prophets.

Lesson Twenty Three

The Most Severe Punishment

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says:

اَشَدُّ النَّاسِ عَذَابًا فِیْ الْقِیَامَهِ عَالِمٌ لَمْ یَعْمَلْ بِعِلْمِه وَ لَمْ یَنْفَعْهُ عِلْمُه

One who knows something and does not observe it, and does not use his knowledge, his punishment in the hereafter would be the most severe. [۲۲]

Brief description

In Islam, knowledge is always regarded as a tool for practical application and for improving the life of an individual and the society. Otherwise it has no value.

Those who commit a sin unknowingly carry a lesser responsibility than those who do so with knowledge. The responsibility to enlighten others in the society is also proportionate to

. the degree of one�s knowledge

Lesson Twenty Four

Calamity of Debt

: Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) says

اِيَّاكُمْ وَ الْدِّيْنَ فَاِنَّهُ هَمٌّ بِاللَّيْلِ، وَ ذُلٌّ بِالنَّهارِ

Avoid borrowing as far as you can, because it causes grief during the night and [contempt during the day . [۲۳

Brief description

The lure of the material life and competition to acquire luxuries in the present times has caused people to borrow more and more . Many are trapped in the vicious circle of higher debts and increasing repayments leading to more borrowings to finance . repayments

Since a debtor is not a free man, we are instructed not to undertake debt other than . for a dire necessity

Debt is even more dangerous at the country level . Highly indebted countries expose their citizens and future generations to severe economic hardships and to erosion of . their freedom and spiritual independence

Lesson Twenty Five

A Healthy Social Life

: Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says

لَوْ اَنَّ النَّاسَ اَدَّوْا حُقُوْقَ اَمْوالِهِمْ لَكَانُوْا عَايِشِيْنَ بِخَيْرِ

If people honour the rights of each other and fulfill requirements of the poor, they will [enjoy a good and satisfactory life . [۲۴

Brief description

The above tradition emphasizes the wisdom of the Islamic obligations placed on the rich to pay to the poor out of their property and savings and the obligation on everyone to respect and honour the rights of others . It clarifies that this is not merely a matter of morality or religious compliance . Rather it is an extremely important social principle with a strong bearing on the peace and prosperity

. of society

One only has to look at the turmoil in the world today to appreciate the value of this gem from the treasures of Islamic knowledge . Dangerous reactions of the poor masses caused by class exploitation and unfair concentration of wealth in the hands of a few are tearing at the fabric of societies today . Peace and love are in short . supply, violence and misery abound

When powerful people treat might as right and use their might to violate the rights of the weak and poor, they endanger human societies and suffer from the ensuing . mayhem

Lesson Twenty Six

Key of Misfortunes

: Imam Hasan Askari (a . s .) says

اِنَّ اللّهَ جَعَلَ لِلشَّرِ اَقْفَالاً وَ جَعَلَ مَفَاتِيْحِ تِلْكَ الاَقْفَالِ الشَّرَابَ، وَ الْكِذْبُ شَرٌّ مِنَ الشَّرَابِ

God has placed evils and maladies under locks, the key of which is wine, and lying is [even worse than wine . [۲۵

Brief description

The greatest and most effective tool against evils and maladies is wisdom and intellect, and this is a strong lock set on them . When the lock of �wisdom� is opened by the key of �wine�, all evils and obscenities are let loose and a drunken . person is vulnerable to committing all sorts of crime, sin and corruption

While a drunkard commits a sin under the influence of the mind numbing drink, a liar pollutes the social environment knowingly . When lying permeates a society, it kills the spirit of trust and reliance leading to sins and corruption . Hence lying is even more dangerous than

.wine

Lesson Twenty Seven

Signs of People of Paradise

:Imam Sadeq (a.s.) says

اِنَّ لِاَهْلِ الْجَنَّهِ اَرْبَعَ عَلاَمَاتٍ: مُنْبَسِطٌ وَ لِسَانٌ فَصَيْحٌ وَ قَلْبٌ وَجْهٌ رَحِيْمٌ وَ يَدٌ مُعْطِيَهٌ

The people of paradise have four signs : open face, eloquent and clear tongue, [merciful heart and bountiful hand. [۲۶

Brief description

The noblest human schools are those which train individuals to acquire good character and become valuable members of the society because society is the source .of all blessings

The signs which the above tradition attributes to the people of paradise are all concerned with factors that strengthen social relations and sow seeds of affection in .the land of society

Open and pleasant faces, soft and kind, with clear and eloquent tongues, with hearts yearning to help people, and hands not holding back assistance � Yes! These are the .signs of the people of paradise

Lesson Twenty Eight

Signs of a Hypocrite

:Imam Sadeq (a.s.) says

:Luqman said to his son

لِمُنَافِقٍ ثَلاَثُ عَلاَمَات: يُخَالِفُ لِسَانُهُ قَلْبَهُ وَ قَلْبُهُ فِعْلَهُ وَ عَلاَنِيَتُهُ سَرِيْرَتَهُ

There are three signs of the hypocrites : Their tongue is not consistent with their

[heart, or their heart with their deed, nor their outward with their inward . [۲۷

Brief description

Hypocrisy is a painful, loathsome trait originating from low personality and weak will . To make themselves look better than they are, their tongues will tell a different story from what is in their hearts, they will not walk their talk, will not practice what they preach . They are a weak people, afraid

to reveal their true selves, lacking the will and determination to improve themselves . They appear in different garbs and are treacherous with everybody, even themselves . Even more dangerous are the societies that display a good looking exterior but have bad, rotting, interior . Their tongue, the mass media, is in stark contrast with what is going on in the heart of these societies.

Lesson Twenty Nine

Counsel

Imam Ali (a . s .) says:

اِتَّعِظُوْا بِمَنْ کَانَ قَبْلَکُمْ قَبْلَ اَنْ یَتَّعِظَ بِکُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِکُمْ

Take counsel from your predecessors before the posterity takes counsel from your life and destiny . [۲۸]

Brief description

The history is full of lessons, full of examples and advice . The consequences of injustice, oppression, stagnation and neglect of the needs of changing environment and times are all reflected in the mirror of history . Imam Ali (a . s .), with his extensive knowledge of human history, warns us to take counsel and learn lessons from the actions and mistakes and fate of our predecessors rather than repeat the same mistakes and leave a trail of misfortunes for the posterity to learn from.

Lesson Thirty

Speech and Silence

Imam Ali (a . s .) says:

لاَ خَیْرَ فِیْ الصُّمْتِ عَنِ الْحُکْمِ کَمَا اَنَّهُ لاَ خَیْرَ فِیْ الْقَوْلِ بِالْجَهْلِ

Neither the silence of a wise man nor the speech of an ignorant has any profit . [۲۹]

Brief description

God has urged those who are informed and learned not to remain silent against deviations, misbehavior, injustices and divisive actions of enemies . They should radiate the light of guidance, truth and justice on the hearts through their warm and reasonable logic and expression . Everybody is considered informed and responsible for what he knows, although it may be little . On the other hand, those who do not have sufficient information should not mislead people through their improper .interference . That silence and this speech both cause misfortune

Lesson Thirty One

Delight of Forgiveness

:Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) said

إِذَا قَدَرْتَ عَلَى عَدُوِّكَ فَاجْعَلِ الْعَفْوَ شُكْرًا لِلْقُدْرَهِ عَلَيْهِ

When you overcome your enemy, adopt forgiveness and pardon as the gratitude for [this victory . [٣٠

Brief description

In Islam�s view, any favor and grace, without any exception, should be reciprocated by gratitude . For the gift of empowerment over the enemy, one expresses gratitude by forgiving the enemy . Victories become rooted only when enemy�s heart is purged of the spite and the root cause of the opposition is removed . Pardon will touch their hearts in a way that yesterday�s enemy becomes today�s friend . It is then that the victory is truly complete - outwardly and inwardly . Conversely, those who

seek vengeance after victory not only deprive themselves from a great human virtue, . but also endanger their victory

Lesson Thirty Two

Asceticism in its Real Sense

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

اَلزَّاهِدُ فِیْ الدُّنْیَا مَنْ لَمْ یَغْلِبِ الْحَرَامُ صَبْرَهُ وَ لَمْ یَشْغَلِ الْحلاَلُ شُکْرَهُ

The real ascetic in the world is one whose endurance is not defeated by the temptations of unlawful wealth and who is not distracted from god�s remembrance [and duty of thanksgiving when he acquires lawful wealth . [۳۱

Brief description

Some uninformed people have given a negative twist to the definition of asceticism . They have interpreted asceticism as giving up divine graces and economic pursuits . and living like the poor

This is not the case . Asceticism in its real sense is what is narrated above from Imam Ali (a . s .) . And it could be summarized in two phrases : �enduring hardship rather than resorting to illegal means of acquiring things� and �not forgetting responsibilities and gratitude in respect of lawful things� . With this correct interpretation, asceticism becomes a force for self-improvement and reforms in the . society rather than a negative influence on progress and prosperity

Lesson Thirty Three

The Rank of those who refrain from Sins

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

مَا الْمُجَاهِدُ الشَّهِیْدُ فِیْ سَبِیْلِ اللهِ بِاَعْظَمَ اَجْرًا مِمَّنْ قَدَرَ فَعَفَّ

One who struggles in the way of God and is martyred is not higher in rank than the

[one who can commit a sin but refrains . [۳۲

Brief description

In the eyes of Islam, the most worthy striving is that against one�s own unlawful desires . Moreso, when one lives in an environment where opportunities to

commit sins are plenty and indulgence is commonplace . This requires a strong grounding in morality and control over one�s self and is also necessary for the struggle against enemy to be worthy and fruitful � a battle fought with sincerity, solidarity, pure intention, free from any selfishness and personal interest.

Thus the Imam�s saying that those who succeed in the battlefield of desires resist sins and remain chaste in contaminated environments, are not in a lower rank than the martyrs in the way of god.

Lesson Thirty Four

The Best People

Imam Ali (a . s .) says:

خَيْرُ النَّاسِ قُضَاهُ الْحَقِّ

[The best people are those who judge fairly . [۳۳

Brief description

Fair judgement in legal, social and moral matters is only possible for one who gives equal treatment to his own and others� interests and his personal affection and hatred do not prevent him from justice and righteousness.

And this is possible only for those whose existence is radiated with the light of belief, human virtues and love and affection for humanity . The powerful waves of selfishness, profit motivation and lust cannot overcome their mind and conscience . Such people deserve to be called �the best people�.

Lesson Thirty Five

Worship of Freemen

Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says:

اَلْعُبَّادُ ثَلاثَةٌ: قَوْمٌ عَبَدُوْا اللهَ خَوْفًا فَتِلْكَ عِبادَهُ الْعَبِيْدُ، وَ قَوْمٌ عَبَدُوْا وَ قَوْمٌ عَبَدُوْا اللهَ حُبًّا لَهُ اللهِ طَلَبَ الثَّوابِ فَتِلْكَ عِبادَهُ الاُجْرَاءِ,

فَتِلْکَ عِبادَهُ الاَحْرارِ

Worshippers fall into three groups : Those who worship Allah for the fear of hell; this is the worship of slaves . Those who worship Allah for his reward; this is the worship of mercenaries . Those who worship Allah out of love and affection for Him; this is the worship of free men . [۳۴]

Brief description

Although the promises of divine reward and punishment are all true, and his reward is very valuable and his chastisement is very painful, there are some high minded free men who do not see anything save God, and do not seek anything save God, and the measure of their heart is full

of love and kindness . They are looking beyond rewards and punishment; their motive . for observing God�s command is only love mingled with his cognition and knowing

Lesson Thirty Six

What Breaks Man�s Back

: Imam Baqer (a . s .) says

ثَلَاثٌ قَاصِمَاتُ الظَّهْرِ: رَجُلٌ اِسْتَكْثَرَ عَمَلَه وَ نَسِیَ ذُنُوْبَهُ وَ اَعْجَبَ بِرَایِه

The three types of individuals who destroy themselves : the one who magnifies his [good deed, the one who forgets his sins, and the one who is opinionated . [۳۵

Brief description

Those who magnify their deeds will sit back, well satisfied with their work . This . attitude hinders them from progress and development

And those who forget their sins will continue with new sins everyday instead of compensating for their previous sins . Suddenly one day they will find themselves . down in the depths of despair

And those who rely only on their own opinion will deprive themselves of valuable and essential knowledge and thinking of brilliant minds . They will be repeatedly involved in mistakes and finally their backs will break under the burden of the resulting . problems

Lesson Thirty Seven

Be Clean

: Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) said

اَفْوَاهُکُمْ مِنْ طُرُقِ رَبِّکُمْ فَاَحَبُّهَا اِلَی اللهِ اَطْیَبُهَا رِیْحًا فَطَیِّبُوْهَا بِمَا قَدَرْتُمْ عَلَیْهِ

Your mouth is one of your ways to God . The most favorite mouth before Allah is the

[one most fragrant . So keep your mouth as fragrant as you can . [۳۶

Brief description

This tradition is narrated in the book Vasael-ul-shia in the context of brushing teeth . Its outward meaning is that since man uses his mouth to vocalise God�s remembrance and worship and recite divine verses, he should keep it clean and .fragrant

And its inward meaning

signifies that the mouth which is one of the ways of relating with the divine paths and Allah�s servants is more favoured by Allah when it becomes fragrant with good, clean and kind speech and is free from bad utterances, insults, lies and harshness.

Lesson Thirty Eight

Consequences of Ignorance

Ninth Imam, Imam Jawaad (a.s.) says:

مَنْ عَمِلَ عَلَى غَيْرِ عِلْمٍ اَفْسَدَ اَكْثَرَ مِمَّا يُصْلِحُ

One who acts without knowledge and information will more often be a corrupter rather than a reformer. [٣٧]

Brief description

Loss caused by ignorance is not merely limited to inability to make significant achievements in life. Those who act without knowledge also risk making dangerous mistakes leading to corruption and destruction.

And so one finds cases where an ignorant person intends to do good for his child, but he leads him to misfortune; intends to serve Islam, but disgraces religion; intends to create peace among people, but aggravates disputes and hypocrisy. He generally ends up doing more harm than good.

Lesson Thirty Nine

Foundations of guidance

Imam Jawaad (a.s.) says:

اَلْمُؤْمِنُ يَحْتَاجُ اِلَى ثَلاَثِ خِصَالٍ: تَوْفِيْقٌ مِنَ اللهِ، وَ وَاعِظٌ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ، وَ قَبُوْلٌ مِمَّنْ يَنْصَحُهُ

The believers require three qualities: divine success, a preacher from the heart and soul, and acceptance from advisers. [٣٨]

Brief description

In this life, man travels a path which has much acclivity and declivity and faces innumerable dangers which threaten to derail him . To succeed and become a useful and effective individual in the society, he firstly needs a spiritual relation with God whereby he is supported by God�s pure essence, and then an aware and informed conscience advising him inwardly, and then hearing ears imbibing the thoughts, guidance, advice and consultation of others.

Lesson Forty

Mourning

Imam Baqer (a . s .) says (one of the short speeches of the Prophet (s . a . w . a .), which no one had mentioned before him):

اَلنِّیاحَدُ مِنْ عَمَلِ الْجاهِلِیَّهِ

Mourning is one of the deeds of age of ignorance (one shall not complain about the difficulties, rather he shall try to solve them) . [۳۹]

Brief description

This short and meaningful tradition has an outward and an inward sense.

Its outward refers to the irrelevant actions being popular at the age of ignorance . When somebody died, mourner women were invited to lament on his death by reciting their special songs and deceitful and false poems . And the other meaning, which imam Baqer (a . s .) may refer to, is that mourning and complaining for hard and

difficult events and problems of personal and social life is useless and causes waste of energy and facilities . Instead one should spend that energy to solve the problems, seeking a remedy by the strength of intellect and thinking as well as continuous effort . and tolerance

Lesson Forty One

Examine Yourself Everyday

: Imam Kazem (a . s .) says

لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ لَمْ يُحَاسِبْ نَفْسَهُ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ

[One who does not perform self-examination everyday has no relation with us . [۴۰

Brief description

Preventing loss and increasing profit in any worldly activity, however big or small, requires continuous monitoring and assessment through inspection, measurement and accounting . One can see how careful people are in calculation of their material wealth . And how sensitive are the weight-watchers about small changes in their weight . Yet, surprisingly, some of them do not look into their human, moral and ! spiritual accounts even once during their life . What a terrible negligence

A responsible and vigilant Muslim is one who, as the Imam says, examines his account everyday without exception . If he has done a good deed, he tries to continue it, and if . he has done evil, he repents for it

Lesson Forty Two

Belief is Stronger than Iron

: Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says

اِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ اَشَدُّ مِنْ زُبُرِ الْحَدِيْدِ اِنَّ زُبُرَ الْحَدِيْدِ اِذْ اُدْخِلَ النَّارَ تَغَيَّرَ وَ اِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ لَوْ قُتِلَ ثُمَّ نُشِرَ ثُمَّ قُتِلَ لَمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ قَلْبُهُ.

The believers are stronger than iron parts because when iron is exposed to fire, it

changes, but if the believers are killed and then revived and again killed, there would be no change in their mentalities . [۴۱]

Brief description

Life is a series of problems and complicated matters . Weak people surrender to them very soon and escape from the field, whereas those who are strong on account of their belief

. stand firm to tackle the challenges

They know that there will always be hindrances in complying with God�s command, abstaining from sin, and achieving honours and credits . They realize that self-control, self-sacrifice and resistance against rebellious desires is required in order to succeed . True belief gives them immense strength to continue their endeavor fearlessly in the . path of religion

Lesson Forty Three

Reality of Unity and Divine Justice

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

اَلتَّوْحِيْدُ أَنْ لاَ تَتَوَهَّمَهُ وَ الْعَدْلُ اَنْ لاَ تَتَّهِمَهُ.

Reality of unity of God indicates that one shall not define His essence according to one�s imaginations, and belief in His justice infers that one shall not accuse Him in [any work . [۴۲

Brief description

The principle of God�s existence is clear and manifest for us and any particle from particles of this world points to His dignity, power, knowledge and ability . On the other hand, the reality of His essence is hidden from us because He is an infinite existence and beyond our understanding . So we should consider His essence to be beyond . whatsoever we may imagine and this is the reality of unity

Events occur in the world whose underlying mystery is not always known to us . Belief in God�s justice says to us that all of these events are backed by sound reasons and . any suspicion in this regard is not in conformity with belief in His justice and wisdom

Lesson Forty Four

Some Signs of Belief

: Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says

اَلْمُؤْمِنُ حَسَُ الْمَعُوْنَهِ خَفِيْفُ الْمَؤُنَهِ، جَيِّدُ التَّدْبِيْرِ لِمَعِيْشَتِهِ لاَ يَلْسَعُ مِنْ جُحْرٍ مَرَّتَيْنِ.

A believer provides valuable assistance, has low expenditure, and is prudent in life, [and is never bitten twice from one hole (never inflicted twice from one source) . [۴۳

Brief description

Belief has some scientific, moral and social manifestation and signs, without which it is only a meaningless name . The above tradition refers to four signs

:of it

believers provide valuable assistance to their muslim brothers because their help is . ١ .accompanied with compassion, honesty and awareness

they do not have a luxurious and costly standard of living and do not commit . ٢ .offences to provide for it

.they are prudent and aware in life especially in economic affairs . ٣

they take lesson from each event immediately and thus they are not inflicted twice . ۴ .from the same source

Lesson Forty Five

World is not the Final Purpose, rather it is a Means

:Imam Ali (a . s .) says

اَلدُّنْيا خُلِقَتْ لِغَيْرِها وَ لَمْ تُخْلَقْ لِنَفْسِها.

[World is created for another purpose, not for itself . [۴۴

Brief description

People sometimes have difficulty comprehending the nature of this world . They find one set of interpretations of verses and speeches commending the world and its material tools, introducing it as a house of commerce or farm of saints . And then they find verses and speeches blaming it and calling it dangerous, deceptive and source of .conceit

The above tradition clarifies the issue succinctly indicating that when the world and its material tools are used as a means of attaining human development and justice and prosperity for all, it is to be valued and commended . But when it is considered as an end in itself, just for immediate and inordinate fulfillment of desires, with no higher purpose, and causes rebellion, conceit and obstinacy, it becomes hateful and .dangerous

Lesson Forty Six

Man, what is your Price

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

اِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لِاَنْفُسِكُمْ ثَمَنٌ اِلاَّ الْجَنَّهُ فَلاَ تَبِيْعُوْهَا اِلاَّ بِهَا.

Be aware) no price is good enough for you except everlasting prosperity and) [paradise, so do not exchange it for any other price . [۴۵

Brief description

Usually when somebody is asked about the price of his life, he cannot name a price . . No price is high enough

However, in reality, he exchanges this precious life gradually, day by day, for a very small price indeed . And, lo

and behold, he wakes up one fine day towards the end of his life, to find that he has sold off this priceless asset in exchange for a house or a car or a country villa, which he will soon leave behind in any case � when death comes knocking at the door!

Imam Ali (a . s .) says that nothing whatsoever of the material treasures of this world is worthy enough to be exchanged with the capital of your life . The only thing worth selling your life for is God�s satisfaction, human and spiritual development that leads to an everlasting prosperity in paradise . This is the thing to buy with your life ; it is worthy of every endeavor, attempt and sacrifice one can make .

Lesson Forty Seven

Truth and Falsehood

Imam Ali (a . s .) says:

اِنَّ الْحَقَّ ثَقِيْلٌ مَرِىءٌ, وَ اِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ حَفِيْفٌ وَ بِىْءٌ

Truth is heavy and difficult but pleasant, and falsehood is light and easy but painful and dangerous . [۴۶]

Brief description

How eloquent and interesting is this one short sentence of Imam Ali (a . s .) to describe truth and falsehood ! Usually truth has a harsh appearance and occasionally a bitter taste but has very pleasant results . It is easily absorbed by the body and society is strengthened thereby .

On the other hand, falsehood comes easily and sometimes tastes very sweet, but its effect is fatal . It is like a delicious but poisonous food whose destructive effect on the heart, stomach, and

intestines becomes manifest when it is swallowed . The poison of falsehood also .destroys different organs of society

Lesson Forty Eight

Most Valuable Heritage of Arab

: Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) says

اَصْدَقُ كَلِمَه قَالَتْهَا الْعَرَبُ كَلِمَهُ لُبَيْدٍ: اَلاَ كُلُّ شَیْءٍ مَا خَلاَ الله بَاطِلُ، وَ كُلُّ نَعِيْم لاَ مَحَالَهَ زَائِلُ

The most accurate and eloquent phrase that an arab has stated is the speech of Lobaid (famous poet) where he says : be aware anything other than God is false and [any grace would be finally lost . [۴۷

Brief description

Awareness of the eventual destruction of wealth and positions and end of graces admonishes man to observe truth and justice in gaining them and to be moderate in .consuming them

Eternity and everlasting are terms that can only be applied to God�s majestic .stature, just as indestructibility and morality are attributable only to His pure essence

One should remember this reality in every phase of material life and keep away from .arrogance

Lesson Forty Nine

Those Who Defraud and Cheat

: Imam Reza (a . s .) says

لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ غَشَّ مُسْلِمًا اَوْ ضَرَّهُ اَوْ مَا كَرَهُ.

One who defrauds or causes a loss to a muslim or tricks him, does not belong to us . [[۴۸

Brief description

Those who find their happiness in misfortunes of others and their profit in loss of others are neither human nor true muslims . They lack that social character which gives man superiority over other creatures.

Losses can be inflicted openly or may be hidden through frauds and tricks and other forms of dishonesty . Islam forbids these, whatever the form, as is apparent from the disgust expressed in

(. the above saying of Imam Reza (a . s

Lesson Fifty

Slander

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

اَلْغِیبَهُ جُهْدُ الْعَاجِزِ.

[Slander is the last effort of weak people . [۴۹

Brief description

Few sins can be found among the capital sins that indicate meanness, weakness, . humiliation, and cowardice like slander does

Slanderers falsely blame and ascribe faults to others and damage reputations to satiate the fire of their envy and malice . They are weak and mean persons who do not have the courage to confront their victims with their baseless and unfair criticisms . and can only stab others in the back

It is mentioned in one of the traditions that even if a slanderer repents and the repentance is accepted, he shall be the last one entering paradise . Otherwise, he . would be the first one entering hell

Lesson Fifty One

Signs of an Oppressor

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

لِلظَّالِمِ ثَلَاثُ عَلَامَات: یَظْلِمُ مَنَ فَوْقَهُ بِالْمَعْصِیَهِ وَ مَنْ دُوْنَهُ بِالْغَلَبِهِ، وَ یُظَاهِرُ الْقَوْمَ الظَّلَمَهِ.

The oppressor has three signs : oppresses those who are higher than him through opposition and disobedience, and oppresses those who are inferior to him through [violence and predominance, and cooperates with other oppressors . [۵۰

Brief description

When the ugly urge to oppress becomes ingrained and dominates one�s mind, it shows up in different ways depending on the situation . If he cannot oppress overtly a strong opponent, the oppression takes subtle forms like disobedience and dereliction of duties . Against the weak, the oppressor resorts to open aggression, force, violence and injustice . Another sign of an oppressor is that he selects

. his friends and companions from among the unjust

Lesson Fifty Two

. There is no Incurable Disease

: Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) said

مَا اَنْزَلَ اللهُ مِنْ دَاء اِلاَّ جَعَلَ لَه دَوَاء

[God has not created any disease unless he has created a remedy for it . [۵۱

Brief description

The world in which we live is a series of actions and reactions . For every negative power there is a corresponding positive and corrective power which should be found and used . Continuation of our life is the effect of balance in these powers . There is neither an incurable corporeal disease, nor is there any social problem that cannot be solved . These who assume that certain complex problems have no solution or that some diseases have no cure, neglect this important fact that in essence there is no . such thing as an incurable disease

Therefore, one should not give up . One should persevere and keep on working on the . life�s intractable issues with patience and tenacity until a solution is found

Lesson Fifty Three

? Why Favours are Lost

: Imam Baqer (a . s .) says

اِنَّ اللهَ قَضَى قَضاءً حَتْمًا اَلاَّ يُنْعِمَ عَلَى الْعَبْدِ بِنِعْمَهِ فَيَسْلُبُهَا اِيَّاهُ حَتَّى يُحْدِثَ الْعَبْدُ ذَنْبًا يَسْتَحِقُّ بِذلِكَ النَّقِمَهِ.

God has made an inevitable rule that he does not take back the favours bestowed on [the people, unless they commit an offence causing deprivation from that favour . [۵۲

Brief description

God�s graces are infinite but not unreasonable . He does not grant or take back anything unreasonably . When world�s people use his favours for conceit, corruption, destruction

and injustice, the same favours become the cause of their misfortune . Their favours are taken back and replaced with calamity . Their industries and technology turn destructive, and their society generates discord and discomfort, and even the speed devices become the cause of their retardation, because they have misused the .graces

Lesson Fifty Four

Martyrdom and Purity

:Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) said

اِذَا مُتَّ عَلَى طَهَارَة تَكُوْنُ شَهِيْدًا.

[When you pass away in purity, you shall be ranged with the martyrs . [۵۳

Brief description

The above tradition refers to part of instructions of the Prophet (s . a . w . a .) to one of his companions saying : �if you can, perform ritual ablution day and night, because if you die in this condition, you shall be considered a martyr� . Besides the literal meaning which refers to performing ritual ablution, it refers to a more important aspect : living and dying with purity and innocence . The chaste ones, with guiltless hearts and minds that are free from dishonesty and vanity, who live a pure life and leave the world in this condition, surely will be ranged with martyrs because martyrdom is not limited to being killed in the battle field . There are also other such (. sayings among the traditions from the pure household of the Prophet (s . a . w . a

Lesson Fifty Five

Self Sacrificing Lovers

:Imam Baqer (a . s .) says

اِنَّ اَصْحَابَ جَدِّیَ الْحُسَيْنِ لَمْ يَجِدُوْا اَلَمَ مَسِّ الْحَدِيْدِ.

The devoted companions of my grandfather, Imam Husain (a . s .) did not feel any

[pain under the strokes of sword and spear of enemy . [۵۴

Brief description

When man�s affection for a goal reaches the stage of deep love, all of his feelings are so concentrated on it that any amount of inconvenience is

tolerable for him . Not only tolerable, but it can even become painless . When egyptian women, based on a figurative transient love on seeing Prophet Joseph�s face, could lose their awareness and cut their fingers instead of fruits, it is not surprising that restless lovers in the path of God and self-sacrificing persons in the path of truth and virtue, would not feel pain and toil of heavy strokes of the enemy . First, one shall be a lover, then self-sacrifice and tolerance will inevitably follow.

Lesson Fifty Six

The Wise and The Fool

Imam Ali (a . s .) says:

اَلْعَاقِلُ يَعْتَمِدُ عَلى عَمَلِهِ وَ الْجَاهِلُ يَعْتَمِدُ عَلَى اَمَلِهِ.

[The wise man relies on his endeavor and action and the fool relies on his wishes . [۵۵

Brief description

The wise are positive and truth seeking individuals . So they always look for their high objectives in the external existence, and since attainment to them is not possible without endeavor and attempt, they focus their effort on their action . The foolish and unaware, on the other hand, are drowned in a sea of wishes and imaginations, and seek for what they have lost in the world of imaginations, and since access to fancies does not require work and effort, negative tendencies are manifested in all aspects of their life . They live on their dreams, content with waiting for subjective victories in a tomorrow that never comes.

Lesson Fifty Seven

The Real Religious Men are Few

Imam Husain (a . s .) says:

اَلنَّاسُ عَبِيْدُ الدُّنْيا وَ الدِّيْنُ لَعِقٌ عَلَى اَلْسِنَتِهِمْ يَحُوْطُوْنَهُ ما دَرَّتْ بِهِ مَعَايِشُهُمْ فَاِذَا مُحِّصُوا بِالْبَلاءِ قَلَّ الدَّيآنُوْنَ.

Most of the people are servants of the materialistic world and only pay lip service to

religion . As long as they are enjoying a good life under the grace of religion, they support it . But when they are tested with hardships, only a few are found to be religious . [۵۶]

Brief description

Religion, particularly a religion like Islam, preserves rights of society�s people and supports their real and fair interests . But sometimes religion is a

barrier for personal and private interests of individuals . This is when those who are true to their religion are distinguished from those who only make empty claim to be .religious

Most people look at things from the viewpoint of their own interests . They advocate religion when it preserves their personal rights but when it conflicts with their private interests, they leave it totally or take a selective approach �� we believe in some and disbelieve in the others� . The real religious people are those few who are faithful to their religion in every situation, and religion and belief dictate their priorities .in life, not personal interests

Lesson Fifty Eight

Justice Among Children

:Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) says

اِعْدِلُوْا بَيْنَ اَوْلَادِكُمْ كَمَا تُحِبُّوْنَ اَنْ يَعْدِلُوْا بَيْنَكُمْ.

Observe justice among your children just as you would like that they render justice [among you . [۵۷

Brief description

One of the capital mistakes is discrimination in treatment of children . Some people favour their older and so called senior child and others favour their younger child . Sometimes they exceed the bounds and reserve all of their kindness, property and .affections for one of them, and deprive the others totally

This provokes the fire of malice and envy in the hearts of the ones left out and in time this will develop into enmity among them and vindictiveness towards their parents .and they may even seek vengeance in the society

Lesson Fifty Nine

You are always being Watched

: Imam Mohammad Taqi (Imam Javad) (a . s .) says

اِعْلَمْ اَنَّکَ لَنْ تَخْلُوْ مِنْ عَيْنِ اللهِ فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ تَكُوْنُ.

? You should know that you are never out of God�s sight . Now see how you shall be

Brief description

The first sign of belief in God, the Almighty, is when one feels being under His constant and overall control, from never being out of His sight, and also feeling that His . watchmen have surrounded us from all directions

The higher degree of belief results in more and deeper feeling for this control so that man finds himself constantly in His presence . This feeling is the greatest motivator for correction of faults at the level of the individual and

the society . It is also the most beautiful manifestation of belief and can rectify some of the most complex social disorders.

Lesson Sixty

Neither Flattery, nor Envy

Imam Ali (a . s .) says:

الثّنَاءُ بِاَكْثَرَ مِنَ الْاِسْتِحْقَاقِ مَلَقٌ وَ التَّقْصِيْرُ مِنَ الاِسْتِحْقَاقِ عَيٌّ اَوْ حَسَدٌ.

When praise and commendation is more than merited and deserved it is flattery and when less than merited it is either debility in expression or envy . [58]

Brief description

Undoubtedly, the worthy individuals and their good attributes and deeds should be praised and appreciated, and in this way we shall encourage and support them to carry on with their good work.

But praise should be proportionate to the merit . Otherwise, it would have negative and harmful consequences . If it is more than merit, it becomes flattery which hurts the dignity of the speaker and also causes self-conceit and self-admiration in the one who is flattered . And if it is less than merit, it discourages the good doers and shows that the speaker is either envious or weak in his power of expression.

Lesson Sixty One

Help your Brothers

Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says:

مَنْ كَانَ فِى حَاجَهِ اَخِيْهِ الْمُسْلِم كَانَ اللهُ فِىْ حَاجَتِهِ.

Whosoever engages in fulfilling the requirements and needs of his muslim brothers, God will fulfil his requests . [59]

Brief description

People often think that if they get involved in solving the problems of others, this would retard progress in their own life . Islam has a different viewpoint . The Prophet (s . a . w . a .) says that if you engage in solving people�s problems and fulfilling their requirements, God, whose power is beyond your power

and all powers, helps you and solves your problems . We have been witnessed how the problems of those who help others get solved in wonderful ways and this is a .divine bounty

Lesson Sixty Two

Do not dwell on the past

:Imam Ali (a . s .) says

لاَ تُشْغِلْ قَلْبَکَ الْهَمَّ عَلَى مَافَاتَ فَيُشْغِلَکَ عَنِ الْاِسْتِعْدَادِ بِمَا هُوَ آت

Do not preoccupy your heart with grief for the past because you will lose out on [preparation for the future . [۶۰

Brief description

One comes across two groups of people . Some of them waste their time regretting for the past mistakes and lose their remaining energies in this way . But others let bygones be bygones and only take some lessons from them for organizing the future and use all of their powers constructively to build a better today and tomorrow . .Surely, they will be the ones who will succeed

Lesson Sixty Three

Islam�s Universality

:Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) says

لاَ يَبْقَى عَلَى ظَهْرِ الْاَرْضِ بَيْتُ مَدَر وَ لاَ وَبَر اِلاَّ اَدْخَلَهُ اللهُ کَلِمَةَ الاِسْلاَمِ.

There will not remain any house on the earth, not even mud houses and woollen [tents, that will not be filled by Allah with the religion of Islam[۶۱

Brief description

Everyday this reality becomes more obvious, i . e . , that the world has two

alternatives : either it will accept Islam, or it will not accept any religion . And since being without a religion is against man�s nature, it shall finally accept Islam . At present a wave of attention to Islam has permeated different parts of the world .

But this matter would be accomplished upon the advent of Imam Mahdi (may our soul be sacrificed for him) . Thereupon, idolatry

and polytheism would be removed from the earth and Islam will prevail throughout .the world . The Prophet (s . a . w . a .) has given the good tiding in the above tradition

Lesson Sixty Four

!Do not belittle any sin

:Imam Hasan Askari (a . s .) says

مِنَ الذُّنُوبِ الَّتِی لَا یُغْفَرُ: الیتنی لَا أُؤاخَذُ اِلَّا بِهَذَا

One of the sins which would not be forgiven is for a man to say, �i wish my sin to be [only this one� . [۶۲

Brief description

Minor sins are changed to major sins due to several factors, one of which is to consider them to be little and unimportant . This is one of the dangerous satanic .temptations

Those sins which man fears and considers as major sins are not so dangerous because one is always careful not to commit them . But when he assumes a sin to be minor and is not afraid of it, he is easily drawn to it again and again; minor sins change to major, keeping him away from happiness and prosperity for ever . Furthermore, every sin, however small, is significant in one respect : it exceeds the bound of rules of .Allah, the Almighty

Lesson Sixty Five

Excellence of a Scholar

:Imam Musa ibne Ja�far (a . s .) says

فَضْلُ الْفَقِیْهِ عَلَی الْعَابِدِ کَفَضْلِ الشَّمْسِ عَلَی الْکَوَاکِبِ.

[Excellence of a scholar over a votary is similar to excellence of sun over the stars . [۶۳

Brief description

The stars in the sky are themselves luminous but fail to provide luminosity to the earth and to illuminate the path for us.

Sunlight and its bright and shiny rays, on the other hand, revive and energise the earth and also light up the path for all inhabitants of planets in

the solar system . The sun thus enables others to distinguish the right path from the deviant one, the high road from crag . And it is this that distinguishes a scholar from a devotee . The latter is concerned only with saving himself whereas the former tries to .also save others from drowning

.Just as planets need sunlight, votaries need a scholar

Lesson Sixty Six

Mutual Rights

:Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) says

يَلْزَمُ الْوَالِدَيْنِ مِنَ الْحُقُوْقِ لِوَلَدِهِمَا مَا يَلْزَمُ الْوَلَدَ لَهُمَا مِنْ حُقُوْقِهِمَا.

In the same way as the children are to be held to account for disregarding parents� [rights, parents are also accountable for not observing the children�s rights . [۶۴

Brief description

Rights and duties always go hand in hand . And greater rights call for greater duty and .responsibility

The holy quraan places heavy emphasis on duty to one�s parents . While parents enjoy great rights vis a vis their children, they also bear a heavy responsibility to them . They shall at no time neglect to train their children, to help them improve bodily as well as spiritually and to keep them away from mental and moral taints . The tumult of .their life shall not hinder them from this great duty

Lesson Sixty Seven

Obedience is Less Costly

:Imam Kazem (a . s .) says

اِيَّاکَ اَنْ تَمْنَعَ فِی طَاعَهِ اللهِ فَتُنْفِقَ مِثْلَیْهِ فِی مَعْصِیَهِ اللهِ.

Do not refrain from spending your wealth in obedience to God . Disobedience and sin will cost you twice as much . [۶۵]

Brief description

There are some people who are stingy in paying, for example, for good hygiene, and they end up paying much more for treatment of the diseases they could have prevented with good hygiene .

It is a general rule that when a man refrains to spend on things that are essential to proper living, he would have to bear more costs on remedial actions and damage control

.

Those who save expenses or time on training their children, will incur onerous costs on consequences such as the child�s drug addictions or criminal acts . And those who refrain to pay for fulfilling requirements of society�s deprived people, will pay the costs, sometimes several times higher, for dealing with the resulting turmoil .

Lesson Sixty Eight

The World is a Market

Imam Hadi (a . s .) says:

الدُّنْيا سُوْقٌ رَبِحَ فِيْهَا قَوْمٌ وَ خَسِرَ آخَرُوْنَ.

[World is a market in which some gain and some lose ! [۶۶

Brief description

This world is neither man�s main home, nor his permanent residence . Rather it is a great house of commerce to which man is sent . He is given a capital in the form of his life span, physical and mental powers, guidance and intelligence, so that he may use these to accumulate valuable provisions to take back for his eternal prosperity and everlasting life .

Those who are active, diligent, vigilant, hard-working and far sighted know the tricks of this great commerce . They do not relent for a moment, always on the look out for opportunities to trade their temporary worldly goods to earn precious heavenly goods, merchandise with an eternal shelf life, and a bright destiny for themselves as well as their society . Unlike the losers, they do not spend their capital on futile, transitory and destructive worldly pursuits which result in leaving the world empty handed .

Lesson Sixty Nine

The Most Dignified People

: Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) says

اِنَّ اَعْظَمَ النَّاسِ مَنْزِلَهً عِنْدَ اللهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيامَهِ اَمْشاهُمْ فِىْ اَرْضِهِ بِالنَّصِيْحَهِ لِخَلْقِهِ.

The most dignified people on the day of resurrection are those who had engaged [most in public service and benevolence . [۶۷

Brief description

Public service is one of the greatest Islamic sorbs . And one of the ways of service to God�s people is respecting and

protecting their interests and their benefits as one�s own interest and benefit, and dealing with them sincerely and benevolently in their presence as well as behind their .back

Lesson Seventy

Three Basic Social Principles

:Imam Sadeq (a .s .) says

اَلنَّاسُ سَوَاءٌ كَاَسْنَانِ الْمِشْطِ وَ الْمَرْءُ كَثِيْرٌ بِاَخِيْهِ وَ لاَ خَيْرَ فِى صُحْبَهِ مَنْ لَمْ يَرَ لَكَ مِثْلَ الَّذِىْ يَرَى لِنَفْسِهِ.

People are equal (in social rights) with each other like the teeth of a comb ! An individual becomes a great society together with his (religious) brothers . And it is not right to associate with one who does not wish for you whatever he wishes for himself . [[۶۸

Brief description

.Three basic social principles are mentioned in the above tradition

First, equal rights and justice for everyone irrespective of their colour, race, language .and social status

Second, the relationship of an individual with the society and the society with an individual . Each individual counts and in co-operation with his brothers forms a great .community

And third, the necessity of respecting the others� interests as one�s own interests .as the basic element of true friendship and companionship

A society devoid of these three principles is neither an Islamic nor a humanitarian .society

Lesson Seventy One

Hastiness and Precipitance

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

اَلْحِدَّهُ نَوْعٌ مِنَ الْجُنُوْنِ لِاَنَّ صاحِبَهَا يَنْدَمُ فَاِنَّ لَمْ يَنْدَمْ فَجُنُوْنُها مُسْتَحْكَمٌ.

Hastiness and precipitance is a kind of insanity and those having this attribute repent of their actions very soon, or (if they continue on this path) it shows that their insanity [is perpetual and firmly ingrained in them . [۶۹

Brief description

Intellect and wisdom dictate that one avoids undue haste and precipitance because in this condition one often fails to adequately

study all the relevant aspects to make a correct decision . And soon one has to repent . for the consequences of his naive and impulsive actions

Sometimes, man dissipates the worth of all of his good speeches by one hasty inappropriate remark, and loses his old intimate friends and that jolts him into sincere . repentance

As for those who do not desist even after observing the bad consequences of their hasty actions, they can be said to suffer from insanity that is ongoing and well . entrenched

Lesson Seventy Two

True Asceticism

: Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) says

اَلزُّهْدُ فِى الدُّنْيا قَصْرُ الاَمَلِ وَ شُكْرُ كُلِّ نِعْمَهِ وَ الْوَرَعُ عَنْ كُلِّ مَآ حَرَّمَ اللهُ.

Asceticism in this world is based on three things : curtailment of desires, thanksgiving [for blessings, and avoiding the prohibited things . [۷۰

Brief description

Most people misunderstand the concept of Islamic asceticism and consider it as isolation and separation from material and social life . They define ascetics as those who practice seclusion from society and abstention from all material pleasures of . social life

True asceticism is in fact based on a corrective social concept as stipulated in the . above tradition

It includes protection of rights of others, keeping away from illegitimate and unlawful wealth, and using one�s resources for worthy and humanitarian purposes (which is the real concept of thanksgiving) as well as minimising one�s desires for material things which, if unchecked, can lead man to dissociate from everything other than the

. pursuit of money, position and lust

Lesson Seventy Three

Trial of Dignity

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

ثَلَاثٌ يُمْتَحَنُ بِهَا عُقُوْلُ الرِّجَالِ هُنَّ المَالُ وَ الْوِلاَيَهُ وَ الْمُصِيْبَهُ.

There are three things based on which intellect of dignified individuals is tried : wealth, [rank, and calamity . [۷۱

Brief description

Divine trials are the means of development and improvements and they do not have . special tools

Men may be tested by any means, but three of them are more important than the : others

– whether or not he loses his intellect and wisdom when he gains property and

? wealth

when a rank is awarded to him, whether his capacity is so fragile that he forgets – ? everything

and when an unpleasing event happens to him, does he become impatient and – ? ungrateful

Lesson Seventy Four

Correct Program for World and Hereafter

: Imam Reza (a . s .) says

اِعْمَلْ لِدُنْیاکَ کَاَنَّکَ تَعِیْشُ اَبَدًا وَ اِعْمَلْ لِاٰخِرَتِکَ کَاَنَّکَ تَمُوْتُ غَدَاً.

Work for the world as if you would be alive forever, and work for the hereafter as if [you would die tomorrow ! [۷۲

Brief description

Above tradition clarifies the attitude of Islam towards the matters concerned with material and spiritual life . A positive and responsible moslem should observe discipline in the matters concerned with material life as if he would abide there forever . This clearly rejects the idea that one has to shun this world to be a true . ascetic

And at the same time he should be extremely concerned about the state of his readiness for the life after death . So much so that he should be convinced that if he were to die tomorrow, he would not be found wanting or deficient in any aspect . In other words, he should keep himself ready for death at any moment by ensuring that he has purified himself with the water of real repentance for his misdeeds and has settled his dues and made arrangements such that he leaves the world without any . loose ends in matters of his obligations and rights of others

Lesson Seventy Five

Effect of Sin

:Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says

مَنْ يَمُوْتُ بِالذُّنُوْبِ اَكْثَرُ مِمَّنْ يَمُوْتُ بِالآجالِ وَ مَنْ يَعِيْشُ بِالإِحْسانِ اَكْثَرُ مِمَّنْ يَعِيْشُ بِالأَعْمَارِ.

Those who die as a result of sin are more than those who die due to natural death, and those who

have a long life as a result of beneficence are more than those who have a long life [due to natural life . [۷۳

Brief description

It is proved today that the cause of most physical diseases lies in spiritual and emotional factors, and one of the most important causes of mental diseases is the heavy pressures imposed on man�s soul by his conscience . A sinner is judged in the court of conscience and suffers painful spiritual punishments and its reaction is manifested in the body and soul in the form of diseases and even death . On the contrary, the beneficent people are encouraged by their conscience and this spiritual encouragement empowers them and makes them cheerful and increases their life span . Hence, sin shortens life, and beneficence prolongs it.

Lesson Seventy Six

Shiites and Divine Bounties

Imam Baqer (a . s .) says to one of his friends:

اَبْلِغْ شِيْعَتَنا اَنَّهُ لاَ يُنَالُ مَا عِنْدَ اللهِ اِلاَّ بِعَمَل

Declare to our shiites that no one receives divine favours and bounties except [through action . [۷۴

Brief description

This speech of Imam Baqer (a . s .) is a reply to those who suppose that they could reach the highest position before God only by adopting the name of shiism and expressing love to the household of the Prophet (s . a . w . a .), while we know that in Islam the important thing is one�s actions . The word �shiite� is derived from the word �moshaieat� meaning following somebody . And so, since the

shiites say that they are the followers of the household of Prophet (s . a . w . a .), they must also follow the practices of the imams in their day to day life in order to be a true . shia and win divine blessings

Lesson Seventy Seven

? With whom we shall consult

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

لاَ تُدْخِلَنَّ فِيْ مَشْوَرَتِکَ بَخِيْلاً يَعْدِلُ عَنِ الْفَضْلِ وَ يَعِدُکَ الْفَقْرَ وَ لاَ جَبَانًا يُضْعِفُکَ عَنِ الاُمُوْرِ وَ لاَ حَرِيْصًا يُزَيِّنُ لَکَ الشَّرَهِ بِالْجَوْرِ.

Do not consult with misers because they prevent you from service to people and frighten you from poverty, and do not consult with timid people, because they weaken your will to perform important tasks, and do not consult with greedy persons, because [they beautify injustice to you . [۷۵

Brief description

Consultation is one of the important Islamic instructions, but while consultation with the right persons helps in improvements and corrective actions, consulting those with certain weaknesses is harmful . Thus imam (a . s .) recommends that we strictly avoid consulting, specially in important social affairs, with those who are miser or timid or greedy . One of them prevents man from munificence of divine graces, and the other weakens his resolve, and the third encourages man to violate rights of others out of . greed

Lesson Seventy Eight

The Best Favor

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

اَجَلُّ النِّعَمِ اَلْعَافِيَهُ وَ خَيْرُ مَا دَامَ فِيْ الْقَلْبِ الْيَقِيْنُ.

The best favor is health and the best thing which could fill man�s heart is belief in

[God . [۷۶

Brief description

Imam Ali (a . s .) has actually referred to the greatest material and spiritual favors . Physical health is the greatest divine favor in the material realm and it is indispensable for an active and a happy and prosperous life . And

among spiritual favors, nothing is higher than the light of belief and faith . It is the most illuminating light for the path of life and the most effective remedy for diseases of ignorance, humiliation, inferiority and taint . It bestows tranquility to the heart and the soul !

Lesson Seventy Nine

Invisible Imam (a . s .)

كَيْفَ يَنْتَفِعُ النَّاسُ بِالْحُجَّهِ الْغَائِبِ الْمَسْتُوْرِ؟ قَالَ كَمَا يَنْتَفِعُوْنَ بِالشَّمْسِ اِذَا سَتَرَهَا السَّحَابُ.

Imam Sadeq (a . s .) was asked : how can people enjoy the existence of an invisible and hidden imam ? Imam said : as they enjoy sunlight from behind the clouds . [٧٧]

Brief description

Sunlight is the source of all activity on this earth and no living creature can continue to live without it . The fact that it sometimes comes from behind the clouds does not diminish its utility . And the same applies to the light from a divine imam and leader in the context of man�s spiritual and human life .

Sun hidden by a cloud, just like a light behind a translucent glass, sends out a considerable part of its light and removes the darkness of night and benefits the living plants and creatures . Spiritual blessings of imam (a . s .) illuminate the human world even from behind the hiding curtain, but just as the amount of sunlight entering a building depends on its openings, people�s share from the light of leadership is proportionate to the method and degree of their relation and connection with the imam .

Lesson Eighty

Do not listen to all Utterances !

Imam Javad (a . s .) says :

مَنْ اَصْغَى اِلَى نَاطِقٍ فَقَدْ عَبَدَهُ فَاِنْ كَانَ النَّاطِقُ عَنِ اللهِ فَقَدْ عَبَدَ اللهَ وَ اِنْ كَانَ النَّاطِقُ يَنْطِقُ عَنْ لِسَانِ اِبْلِيْسَ فَقَدْ عَبَدَ اِبْلِيْسَ.

One who listens to an orator has worshipped him . Thus if the

orator delivers God�s message, he (the listener) has worshipped god, and if he talks from the tongue of iblis, he has worshipped iblis. [۷۸]

Brief description

Utterance, whatsoever and from whoever it may be, has an effect, and listening to the utterances is usually accompanied with an impression in man�s heart. Orators will say what suits their purpose. Some will be on the side of truth and others will try to inculcate falsehoods. Submission to each of these two groups is a kind of worship because the essence of worship is nothing else than submission.

Therefore, one should listen to truthful utterances and become truth worshippers and avoid purveyors of falsehoods and prevent their dark utterances from entering one�s ears and reaching the depths of the soul.

Lesson Eighty One

Devilish People

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said:

اِذَا رَاَيْتُمُ الرَّجُلَ لاَ يُبالِىْ مَا قَالَ اَوْ مَا قِيْلَ فِيْهِ فَاِنَّهُ لَبَغِيَّةٌ اَوْ شَيْطَانٌ.

When you find that a person is indifferent to what he says or what is said about him, you shall know that he is either unchaste or satan. [۷۹]

Brief description

Drowning in various sins makes man indifferent to any and every accusation. He does not care about what he says about others and what is said about himself. Such persons are mean, shameless and devilish.

Lesson Eighty Two

Real Feast

Imam Ali (a.s.) says:

اِنَّمَا هُوَ عِيْدٌ لِّمَنْ قَبِلَ اللهُ صِيَامَهُ وَ شَكَرَ قِيَامَهُ وَ كُلَّ يَوْمِ لاَ يُعْصَى اللهُ فِيْهِ فَهُوَ عِيْدٌ.

Today (the day of feast following the month of fasting) is the feast for those whose fasts are accepted and their sorbs are favored by God, and any day in which you do [not commit a sin, is the day of feast . [۸۰

Brief description

Feast and happiness after one month of fasting in the blessed month of Ramazan is actually the feast of overcoming sensual desires, and of obedience of God�s command . Thus, this is a day of feast only for those who have been victorious in fulfilling this great divine duty and understanding its true philosophy . But for those shameless people who have not respected this great month and its educational . program, it is nothing but a day of mourning and disgrace

Lesson Eighty Three

What has Real Value

: Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) says

اِنَّ اللهَ لاَ يَنْظُرُ اِلَى صُوَرِكُمْ وَ لاَ اِلَى اَمْوَالِكُمْ وَ اِنَّمَا يَنْظُرُ اِلَى قُلُوْبِكُمْ وَ اَعْمَالِكُمْ.

God does not consider the faces and properties, rather he considers your hearts and [actions . [۸۱

Brief description

While the criterion for evaluating dignity of individuals in most societies is material wealth and physical privileges, in Islam such evaluation bases are invalid and worthless . To ascertain what has real value, we need to look for that which is considered worthy by the Creator and this is none other than the purity

of one�s heart and deeds . Those who possess the twin treasures of pure thoughts . leading to pure actions are the ones who will be victorious in the divine court

Lesson Eighty Four

Two Things Cause Destruction of People

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

اَهْلَکَ النَّاسَ اِثْنَانِ خَوْفُ الْفَقْرِ وَ طَلَبُ الْفَخْرِ.

[Two things destroy people : fear of poverty and seeking of fanciful honors ! [۸۲

Brief description

If we consider the causes of increase in transgressions, larcenies, briberies, thefts, cheating and plundering, we find that the above two factors are at the root of these events . Some people, having everything, commit offences only for the fear of poverty and the obsession for securing the future . And some others sacrifice their peace of mind and soul in order to acquire fanciful honors . Giving up these destructive traits . allows man to enjoy inner peace and happiness

Lesson Eighty Five

A Good Deed is Never Small

: Imam Sajjad (a . s .) says

لاَ یَقِلُّ عَمَلٌ مَعَ تَقوی وَ کَیْفَ یَقِلَّ مَا یُتَقَبَّلُ.

A deed accompanied with sincerity and piety is not small, although it may look small . [How is it possible for a deed favored by God to be small ! ? [۸۳

Brief description

Holy quran says : God only accepts the deeds which are accompanied with piety and pure intention . Thus, purity in intention and sincerity and piety should be the most

important consideration . Such deeds are valuable even if in material terms the quantity etc is small, because they are favored by God and thus can never be considered little . In summary, hollow, impure and hypocritical deeds are worthless no matter how numerous and large they are, whereas even something light and little performed

. with pure and sincere intention is worthy and weighty

Lesson Eighty Six

Sins and Apology

: Imam Husain (a . s .) says

اِیَّاکَ وَ مَا تَعْتَذِرُ مِنْهُ فَانَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ لاَ یُسِیْءُ وَ لاَ یَعْتَذِرُ وَ الْمُنَافِقُ کُلَّ یَوْمَ یُسِیِءُ وَ یَعْتَذِرُ.

Do not sin so that you do not have to apologize for it . A believer does not sin and does not apologize, whereas a hypocrite sins everyday and apologizes everyday . [۸۴]

Brief description

Everybody is apt to make mistakes, but there is a marked difference in how the believers and the hypocrites deal with this reality . The believers try to avoid sins in the first place to pre-empt the need for having to apologise . They know that insincere and routine apologies do not acquit anyone . But the hypocrites carry on sinning and apologising in a never ending cycle . A sign of hypocrites is that outwardly they show repentance through the apology while inwardly they are unrepentant since they are not averse to repeating the sin

Lesson Eighty Seven

The Worst Method of Life

: Imam Reza (a . s .) says

اَسْوَءُ النَّاسِ مَعَاشًا مَنْ لَمْ یَعِشْ غَیْرَهُ فِی مَعَاشِهِ.

The worst people, from an economic viewpoint, are those who do not offer livelihood to others from their own livelihood, and others are excluded from their life . [۸۵]

Brief description

A healthy economy is one which strengthens social relations and embraces all

members of the society . When wealth is concentrated in certain individuals or groups who refuse to allow the rest to benefit, a cancer takes root in that soceity that will eventually destroy its economic health to

the detriment of all . Imam Reza (a . s .) refers to this as the worst type of livelihood . and economic life

Lesson Eighty Eight

Our Promises are Our Debts

: Imam Reza (a . s .) says

اِنَّا اَهْلُ بَيْت نَرَى وَعْدَنا عَلَيْنا دَيْنًا كَما صَنَعَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ.

We are the household who consider our promises as our debts; as did the Holy [Prophet (s . a . w . a .) . [٨۶

Brief description

Debt is not only what man receives from someone as a loan . Those who make promises to others in fact undertake an obligation and accept a responsibility and . have an undeniable moral duty to make good on the promise

Fulfilling the promise indicates dignity, belief, greatness, honesty and truthfulness and strengthens mutual trust and confidence among people . It revives the spirit of social cooperation . For all these reasons, Islam strongly emphasizes the need to fulfil all . promises

Lesson Eighty Nine

Illegitimate Property

: Imam Baqer (a . s .) says

اِنَّ الرَّجُلَ اِذَا اَصَابَ مَالاً مِنْ حَرَام لَمْ يُقْبَلْ مِنْه حَجٌّ وَ لاَ عُمْرَةٌ وَ لاَ صِلَةُ رَحِمْ.

Whenever a man gains a property in an illegitimate way, neither his hajj and umrah [performed with that property is accepted, nor the uniting of kindred . [٨٧

Brief description

Islam cares not only about the results but also about how the results are achieved . Those who are contented with their good deeds, but do not think about the means by which they perform the good deed, neglect this reality that none of them is accepted . by God, unless the means are pure and sacred

Lesson Ninety

Be Self-Sufficient

: Imam Sajjad (a . s .) says

طَلَبُ الْحَوٰائِجِ اِلَى النَّاسِ مَذَلَّةٌ لِلْحَيٰاةِ وَ مَذْهَبَةٌ لِلْحَيٰاءِ وَ اِسْتِخْفٰافٌ بِالْوَقٰارِ وَ هُوَ الْفَقْرُ الْحٰاضِرُ.

Asking from people is abasement in life and destroys modesty and degrades man�s [dignity, and is a poverty which man brings upon for himself . [٨٨

Brief description

Some people subject themselves to poverty although they think that they are escaping from it . They do this by making themselves dependent and needy through . unnecessary demands from others . In the process they also ruin their human dignity

Islam instructs its followers to be self-sufficient as far as possible and avoid a life of . dependency for having to depend on others is itself a form of poverty

Lesson Ninety One

! Woe unto such person

: Imam Sajjad (a . s .) says

يٰا سَوْ اَتٰاهُ غَلَبَتْ اِحْدٰاتُهُ عَلَى عَشَرٰاتِهِ.

[Woe unto one whose units precede his tenfolds . [٨٩

Brief description

Holy quran says : one who performs a good deed will be rewarded tenfold, but one

. (who commits a sin shall be punished for the same (cattle, ۱۶۱

. This verse clarifies the interpretation of the above tradition

Hopeless is the person who gives up so much reward from obedience of God�s . command and accumulates only the punishments for sins

Lesson Ninety Two

! Sinful Ways Solve Nothing

: Imam Husain (a . s .) says

مَنْ حاوَلَ اَمْرًا بِمَعْصِيَةِ اللهِ كَانَ اَفْوَتُ لِمَا يَرْجُوْ وَ اَسْرَعُ لِمَا يَحْذِرُ.

One who looks to performing something through disobedience to God, will lose whatsoever he desires sooner; and, whatsoever he fears, will happen to him sooner . [[۹۰

Brief description

Some people suppose that if they use unlawful means for obtaining their goals, they will attain their ends sooner . However, above tradition says that in fact such ways will expedite the loss of their illgotten objects and their fears will also materialise sooner . For example, he seeks tranquility from earning unlawful wealth, yet first of all he loses . tranquility as a result of it and is involved in distress and anxiety which he had feared

Lesson Ninety Three

! The Self-Conceited

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

مَنْ رَضِیَ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ كَثُرَ السَّاخِطُ عَلَیْهِ.

[He who is self-conceited will find a lot of people dissatisfied with him . [۹۱

Brief description

Self-love and self-concern in proper measure is necessary for survival, but if it exceeds the bounds, it becomes selfishness and self-conceit.

The self-conceited people never look at their own faults and consider themselves responsible, pure, faultless and important in the society. For this reason they have a lot of unreasonable expectations from people, and this causes widespread anger against them.

Lesson Ninety Four

Nearer Kinsfolk

Imam Mujtaba (a.s.) says:

اَلْقَرِيْبُ مَنْ قَرَّبَتْهُ الْمَوَدَّهُ وَ اِنْ بَعُدَ نَسَبُهُ وَ الْبَعِيْدُ مَنْ بَاعَدَتْهُ الْمَوَدَهُ وَ اِنْ قَرُبَ نَسَبُهُ.

Near kinsfolk are those who are more affectionate, although they may be genealogically not as near as those who are less affectionate. [۹۲]

Brief description

Kinship is one of the most important social relations in Islam. It enables formation of well-knit groups in the heart of great human society whose members cooperate closely and help each other in solving critical problems.

But the criterion of relationship in Islam, as stated in the above tradition, gives much importance to affection and friendship, not merely the closeness of genealogical relationship.

Lesson Ninety Five

Throwing off a habit

Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) says:

رَدُّ الْمعْتَادِ عَنْ عَادَتِهِ كَالْمُعْجِزْ.

[Throwing off bad habits is like performing a wondrous act . [۹۳

Brief description

Habit is one of the great divine favors because it facilitates difficult human tasks and automates a lot of complicated and necessary aspects of living (such as speaking, walking, etc) .

But when a bad habit is acquired, it becomes a dangerous addiction and very difficult to shed . So much so that Imam Hasan Askari (a . s .) has compared the shedding of an entrenched habit to an amazing or wondrous act .

Lesson Ninety Six

Epic of Karbala

Imam Husain (a . s .) says :

اِنِّیْ لاَ ... لاَ وَ اللهِ لاَ اُعْطِیْهِمْ بِیَدِیْ اِعْطَاءَ الذَّلِیْلِ وَ لاَ اَفِرُّ فِرَارَ الْعَبِیْدِ اَرَی الْمَوْتَ اِلاَّ سَعَادَةً وَ الْحَیَاةَ مَعَ الظَّالِمِیْنَ اِلاَّ بَرَمًا.

I swear by God that I shall never join hands with them like those humbled, nor escape like the slaves . I consider death as nothing but prosperity, and life with the unjust as nothing but a source of blame and misfortune . [۹۴]

Brief description

Karbala is the great and everlasting epic of man�s history .

Ashura is an unforgettable day in the history of mankind and nations who want to live honorably and die honorably . The above two sentences from a speech of Imam Husain (a . s .) are two clear signs of this reality .

Lesson Ninety Seven

Who is Wise ?

Imam Ali (a . s .) was asked to describe a wise man . He replied :

اَلْعَاقِلُ هُوَ الَّذِیْ یَضَعُ الشَّیءَ مَوَاضِعَهُ.

[The wise is one who puts everything in its right place . [۹۵

Brief description

A lot is said about the meaning and concept of wisdom, but the above definition says it all so succinctly in one short phrase . A better interpretation will be hard to find . Wisdom is nothing other than putting everything in its right place : giving everybody the place they merit, showing grief and happiness, friendship and enmity, mildness and harshness, kindness and severity according to the circumstances, adopting correct priorities in worship, work and healthy recreation . In short, doing the right

.thing in the right way at the right time

Lesson Ninety Eight

Cause of Enmity

:Imam Ali (a.s.) says

اَلنَّاسُ اَعْدَاءُ مَآ جَهِلُوْا.

[People are enemies of things which they do not know (or understand). [۹۶

Brief description

We see some people who deny a lot of truths and rise against them while not being able to find any cause for it save ignorance and unawareness. This wise saying is specially true in religious matters. Take the case of people who are well versed professionals in other sciences but oppose and disbelieve when it comes to religious matters. If we analyse this, we find that they have not really understood the depth and philosophy of religion. Otherwise, they would never oppose them. This reality .has been repeatedly experienced

Lesson Ninety Nine

The Zealous

:Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says

اِنَّ اللهَ تَعَالَى يُحِبُّ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْغَيُوْرَ.

[Allah likes his zealous servants. [۹۷

Brief description

Zeal in this context refers to resolute determination, earnest dedication, fervent striving to protect divine bounties including everything from religion and chastity to .water and land and well being of Islamic countries

A zealous person is one who is fully committed and takes responsibilty for protecting these things and becomes very disturbed by any aggression and encroachment .against them

Zeal is one of the prominent attributes of the prophets and men of God . We read about Abraham (a . s .), the idol- breaker hero, �surely Abraham was zealous� . .Zeal is a powerful barrier against the advance of alien forces and idealogies

Lesson One Hundred

A Fertile Being

:Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) said

مَثَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِ مَثَلُ النَّخْلَهِ مَا اَخَذْتَ مِنْهَا مِنْ شَیْءٍ نَفَعَکَ.

A believer is like a palm tree, whatsoever you take away from it is useful and [profitable . [۹۸

Brief description

Palm tree is actually one of the very fertile trees . Its fruit is eaten as one of the best foods and sometimes its stone is burnt . Also, things like mats, hats, table-cloth are .woven from its leaves

Its wood is used in construction of simple buildings and also used as a bridge for passing through streams . A fragrant and useful essence is extracted from its blossom .In other words, there is not one part that is discarded

.as useless .discarded

The believers are the same . Their thoughts are useful, their speeches are profitable, their meetings are educational, their religion is reforming and they are loyal in friendship, strong in their decisions . In short, everything about them is worthy.

Lesson One Hundred One

The Best Hands

Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) said

اَلاَيْدِى ثَلاَثَةٌ: سَائَلَةٌ , مُمْسِكَةٌ وَ مُنْفِقَةٌ وَ خَيْرُ الاَيْدِىْ مُنْفِقَةٌ.

There are three types of hands : begging hands, keeping hands and bountiful hands, and the best hands are bountiful hands . [٩٩]

Brief description

Islam teaches its followers to aim for high aspirations, far reaching endeavors and strong affection . Therefore it recommends its followers to avoid begging and dependency on others as far as they can . Not only that, it discourages muslims from hoarding and keeping everything they have for their own exclusive benefit . Rather, they are urged to share their bounties with others as much as they can, and so we read in the above tradition that the best hands are the bountiful hands.

Lesson One Hundred Two

Worse than Death

Imam Hasan Askari (a . s .) says:

خَيْرٌ مِنَ الْحَيَاتِ مَا اِذَا فَقَدْتَهُ اَبْغَضْتَ الْحَيَاتَ وَ شَرٌّ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ مَا اِذَا نَزَلَ بِكَ اَحْبَبْتَ الْمَوْتَ.

Better than life is that which, if you lose it, you would hate life ! And worse than death is that which, if it happens to you, you would welcome death ! [١٠٠]

Brief description

Some people think that the highest worth is the worth of this material life while there are a lot of things more valuable than it . There are some moments in life in which man wishes for death, and there are truths for which he sacrifices himself without . hesitation

The martyrs who lay down their lives for the sake of their religion and

justice and other virtues are those who understand the deep truth in the above tradition . When they found life unpleasant and death a window to a wider world, as well as God�s satisfaction, they bade farewell to life and embraced death.

Lesson One Hundred Three

Believers and Hypocrites

Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) says:

اِذَا رَاَيْتُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَ صَمُوْتًا فَادْنُوْا مِنْهُ فَاِنَّهُ يُلْقِى الْحِكْمَهَ وَ الْمُؤْمِنُ قَلِيْلُ الْكَلاَمِ كَثِيْرُ الْعَمَلِ وَ الْمُنَافِقُ كَثِيْرُ الْكَلاَمِ قَلِيْلُ الْعَمَلِ.

When you find a believer silent, approach him because you will hear wise sayings . Believers talk less and are action oriented whereas hypocrites are talkative and inexperienced . [١٠١]

Brief description

Man�s power is not unlimited and everlasting . Therefore, when his energies are used in one direction, there will be less energy left for other things . So it is not surprising if talkative people are short on actions and experience.

Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) who always advocates positive and effective living, says that believers are those who emphasize deeds, not just words, while he considers the opposite attribute of all talk and no action as the sign of the hypocrites.

Lesson One Hundred Four

The Best Heritage

Imam Ali (a . s .) says:

خَيْرُ مَا وَرَثَ الآبَاءُ لِلأَبْنَاءَ الْاَدَبَ.

The best heritage which fathers leave for their children is courtesy . [١٠٢]

Brief description

Courtesy refers to proper behaviour in all encounters and relationships and is associated with respect and honor . Courtesy is concerned with interactions with fellow human beings as well as with God . In both cases, courteous behaviour is one of . the most valuable asset one can possess�it is the key to success in all fields

And on this account, Imam Ali (a . s .) has described courtesy as the highest heritage

which a father leaves for his child . Courtesy is the source of affection, sincerity, friendship, and unity and an important factor in effectiveness of speech and progress . in social objectives

Lesson One Hundred Five

Respect of Freedom of Thought

: Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) said

بِئْسَ الْقَوْمُ قَوْمٌ يَمْشِى الْمُؤْمِنُ فِيْهِمْ بِالتَّقِيَّهِ وَ الْكِتْمانِ.

[When a believer is forced to hide his beliefs, he is living among bad people ! [١٠٣

Brief description

Dissimulation and concealment of one�s ideas and beliefs usually arises when a selfish majority of the society prevent the righteous minority from expressing their thoughts freely . Surely, such a society will not be prosperous . In an Islamic and humanitarian society, the righteous people should have the freedom to disclose their viewpoints for public comments and discourse . No one should hinder them . Instead, there should be respect for freedom of thought and reformative thinking and facilities . should be provided for imparting training and bringing good ideas to fruition

Lesson One Hundred Six

Six Flaws not found in Believers

: Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says

سِتَّهٌ لاَ تَكُوْنُ فِى مُؤْمِن : النَّكْدُ وَ الْحَسَدُ وَ اللَّجاجَهُ وَ اَلْعُسْرُ وَ الْكِذْبُ وَ الْبَغْىُ.

There are six things which do not exist in the believers : strictness, peevishness, envy, . stubbornness, lies and injustice

Brief description

Those who are satisfied with being believers in name only are not real believers . The six ugly attributes specified above should not exist in a true believer . It is interesting to note that all these attributes are concerned with mutual relations and social interactions among the people . True believers are good natured, benevolent, truthful and just and it does not behove those lacking such character to call themselves .believers

Lesson One Hundred Seven

Do not sever all relations with God

:Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says

اِتَّقِ اللهَ بَعْضَ التُّقَى وَ اِنْ قَلَّ وَدَعْ بَيْنَکَ وَ بَيْنَهُ سِتْرًا وَ اِنْ رَقَّ.

Be god-fearing and fear although it may be little, and maintain a curtain between [yourself and Him, although it may be thin . [۱۰۴

Brief description

There are some people who sever all relations between themselves and God . They burn all bridges behind them and close all doors for their return to God as they .proceed along the path of sins and mistakes

Imam Sadeq (a . s .), in this pearl of wisdom, advises us not to do that and to maintain a link however flimsy so that one can return one day and find an open door to enter .for repentance

Lesson One Hundred Eight

True Worship

:Imam Ali (a . s .) says to Komeil

يَا كُمَيْلُ لَيْسَ الشَّاْنُ اَنْ تُصَلِّيَ وَ تَصُوْمُ وَ تَتَصَدَّقَ، اَلشَّاْنُ اَنْ تَكُوْنَ الصَّلاَهُ بِقَلْب نَقِيٍّ وَ عَمَلَ عِنْدَ اللهِ مَرْضِيٍّ وَ خُشُوع سَوِيٍّ.

O, Komeil, it is not sufficient merely to pray and fast and pay alms . It is more

important that your prayer (and other deeds) are performed before God with a pure heart and humility . [۱۰۵]

Brief description

The intention and spirit behind the deed, the manner in which it is accomplished and its quality determine its real value, not its appearance and quantity . Imam Ali (a . s .) emphasizes to Komeil that one should pay attention to the spirit of a deed instead of its appearance

and quantity, because the final aim of these good deeds is man�s education, development and improvement which depends on the sincerity with which he performs them.

Lesson One Hundred Nine

Do not forget your own Faults

Imam Sadeq (a.s.) says:

اِذَا رَأَيْتُمُ الْعَبْدَ يَتَفَقَّدُ الذُّنُوْبَ مِنَ النَّاسِ نَاسِيًا لِذَنْبِهِ فَاعْلَمُوْا اَنَّهُ قَدْ مُكِرَبِهِ.

When you see someone searching for people�s sins and censuring them, but ignoring his own sins, you shall know that he is involved in divine punishment. [۱۰۶]

Brief description

There are a lot of people who are very insolent, vocal and ingenious in criticizing others while they forget and ignore their own state. As the popular proverb says: they see a thorn in the foot of others, but do not see a branch in their own eyes!

Curtains of conceit and unawareness have covered the eyes of such people because they are drowned in sin, self-conceit and selfishness, and are wandering among deviated paths. Those on the right path take care of their own faults before censuring others.

Lesson One Hundred Ten

Great Torment

Imam Sadeq (a.s.) says:

مَنْ سَاءَ خُلْقُهُ عَذَّبَ نَفْسَهُ .

One who is ill-humored torments himself. [۱۰۷]

Brief description

It is usually said that ill-humored individuals who are peevish with everybody, torment and annoy their friends and relatives, while they themselves suffer the greatest torments because they embitter life�s honey and make pure water unpleasant for .themselves

Ill-humored people have a short life and an uneasy spirit, their body is in pain, and is .prone to more sufferings than others

Good temper is one of the qualities which Islam has emphatically recommended to its followers . It has been referred to as an important factor for

. attainment of the eternal paradise

Lesson One Hundred Eleven

Quran is Evergreen

: Imam Reza (a . s .) says

اِنَّ اللهَ تَعالَى لَمْ يَجْعَلِ الْقُرْآنَ لِزَمانٍ دُوْنَ زَمانٍ وَ لاَ لِناسٍ دُوْنَ ناسٍ فَهُوَ فِيْ كُلِّ زَمانٍ جَدِيْدٍ وَ عِنْدَ كُلِّ قَوْمٍ غَضٌّ اِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيامَهِ.

God has not confined quran to a specific time or for a specific nation, and so it is new [at all times and fresh for all nations . [١٠٨

Brief description

Imam (a . s .) gave the above reply to one who had asked why quran does not get old by repeated study, recitation and publication ? This saying points to the reality that quran is not a product of the material world and man�s transient and variable thoughts . So the dust of obsolesence does not cover it . It does not age with time . Rather, it has originated from God who is All-knowing, Omniscient, Eternal . The more it is read, the more it reveals, the more relevant and interesting it becomes with the . passage of time . This in fact is one of the signs of quran�s greatness and grandeur

Lesson One Hundred Twelve

Beware of Sensuality

: Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says

اِحْذَرُوْا اَهْوَائَكُمْ كَمَا تَحْذَرُوْنَ اَعْدَائَكُمْ فَلَيْسَ شَيْءٌ اَعْدَى لِلرِّجالِ مِنْ اِتِّباعِ اَهْوائِهِمْ وَ حَصائِدِ اَلْسِنَتِهِمْ.

Beware of sensual desires in the same way as you watch out for your (obstinate) enemies because man has no enemies greater than following sensual desires and the [outcomes of his tongue ! [١٠٩

Brief description

Undoubtedly, internal enemies are more dangerous than external foes . Therefore, obstinate desires which affect man

. inwardly are considered as the most dangerous enemy for man

Sensuality blinds the eye and deafens the ear . It extinguishes the light of wisdom, . distorts the face of truth and finally leads him to the precipice of corruption

Lesson One Hundred Thirteen

The Only Way of Proximity to Allah

: Imam Baqer (a . s .) says to Jaber Jofi

بَلِّغْ شِيْعَتِيْ عَنِّيْ السَّلاَمَ وَ اَعْلِمَهُمْ اَنَّهُ لاَ قَرابَهَ بَيْنَنا وَ بَيْنَ اللهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ وَ لاَ يُتَقَرَّبُ اِلَيْهِ اِلاَّ بِالطَّاعَهِ لَهُ.

Convey my greetings to my shiites and be it known that there is no kinship (family relationship) between us and Allah and the only way of proximity to Him is by [submission to His commands . [۱۱۰

Brief description

There are those who think that claiming to be a Shia and a friend of the household of the Prophet (s . a . w . a .) is sufficient for their salvation and prosperity . As if such claims would entitle them to inclusion among the relatives of the imams and thus they too would have a special relationship with God, and everything would be well arranged through recommendation and mediation . The truth of the matter is that the only relation of consequence in the relations of creatures to their Creator is their . obedience and fulfillment of duties

Whosoever submits to His command is the closest to Him, and whosoever disobeys is . the farthest, whoever he may be

Lesson One Hundred Fourteen

Illgotten Wealth

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

مَنْ يَكْسِبُ مِنْ غَيْرِ حَقِّهِ يَصْرِفُهُ فِيْ غَيْرِ اَجْرِهِ.

He who acquires wealth illegitimately, will spend it in ways which confer no divine reward . [١١١]

Brief description

It is a common belief that some types of properties are unsuitable for spending on public welfare or charity . Above tradition is

a good proof for this public belief . And one can verify it because one can see cases where some individuals have intended to participate in a good cause using their property, but they have either stopped half way or their project, though completed, is not effective or even counter-productive . On the other hand one finds a lot of faithful and virtuous individuals who have accomplished a lot of good work with their meagre .resources

Lesson One Hundred Fifteen

The Most Truthful and Wise

:The Prophet (s . a . w . a .) said

لِكُلِّ اُمَّهٍ صَدِيْقٌ وَ فارُوْقٌ وَ صَدِيْقُ هذِهِ الْاُمَّهِ وَ فارُوْقُها عَلِيُّ ابْنُ اَبِىْ طالِبٍ (ع).

Every nation has a man who is truthful and a distinguisher, and the one who is truthful [and a distinguisher from my nation is Ali ibne Abi Taleb (a . s .) . [۱۱۲

Brief description

For completion of the program of a genuine religion, an everlasting religion like Islam, there should be someone familiar with all aspects and details of that religion and be able to distinguish between truth and falsehood (deserving the name of distinguisher) . Islam needed such a man after the demise of the Prophet (s . a . w . a .), the most part of whose mission was spent in different conflicts with obstinate enemies . That person had to be someone very truthful, honest, eloquent and frank so that he could remove any ambiguities and doubts that crop up among people in the absence of the Prophet (s . a

w . a .) . This rank, as per the above explicit statement, was allocated to Imam Ali (a . . .(. s

Lesson One Hundred Sixteen

Simple Life and Cooperation in House-Keeping

: Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says

كَانَ عَلِيٌّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلاَمُ يَحْتَطِبُ وَ يَسْتَقِىْ وَ يَكْنِسُ وَ كَانَتْ فَاطِمَهُ تَطْحَنُ وَ تَعْجِنُ وَ تَخْبِزُ.

Ali (a . s .) collected wood (for his home) from the desert and fetched water and did [the cleaning, and Fatima (a . s .) made flour, and kneaded it and baked bread . [۱۱۳

Brief description

A world of magnificence of spirit and high human rank is hidden in this short tradition in respect of the great leader of Islam, Imam Ali (a . s .) and the role model for women, Fatima (a . s .) . Their life was very simple and independent but full of sincerity, purity, co-operation and assistance . Work was not a dishonor . Co-operation and understanding was considered a basic privilege and non-adornment was much admired . This lifestyle is no longer found in the homes these days and, . consequently, tranquility and peace have disappeared

Lesson One Hundred Seventeen

One Hour of Justice

: The Prophet (s . a . w . a .) said

عَدْلُ سَاعَه خَيْرٌ مِنْ عِبَادَهِ سَنَه.

. One hour of justice is better than one year of worship

Brief description

Worship is the same relation of creature with creator and �possible� with

�necessary� and paying attention to this relation and connection . Those worships are important educational lessons which have an effective role in correcting man�s spirit and mind . [۱۱۴]

However, we read in the above tradition, that one hour of justice is better and higher than

. one year of (recommended) worship

And somewhere else we read that one hour of thinking and meditation is higher than one night (or one year) of worship . These expressions show the critical importance of justice and meditation, both having a common origin . Wherever there is no justice, . there is no thinking, meditation and wisdom

Lesson One Hundred Eighteen

Real Physician

: The Prophet (s . a . w . a .) says

اَلطَّبِیْبُ اللهُ وَ لَعَلَّکَ تَرْفِقُ بِاَشْیَاءِ تَخْرِقُ بِهَا غَیْرَکَ.

The real physician is God, and the things useful for you may be harmful for others . [[۱۱۵

Brief description

The events happening in man�s life are sometimes due to his wrong policies, choices . or will and there are a lot of painful events like these

But sometimes seemingly unpleasant events occur due to none of the above factors . Such adversities may in fact be medicines administered by God (who is the real physician) to treat his servants . Although these drugs may be bitter, they are a much needed wake-up call, a means of remedial attention to man�s weaknesses and for . removal of his conceit

Lesson One Hundred Nineteen

Successors of the Prophet

: The Prophet (s . a . w . a .) said

لاَ یَزَالُ هذَا الدِّیْنُ عَزِیْزًا مَنِیْعًا اِلَی اِثْنَیٰ عَشَرَ کُلُّهُمْ مِنْ قُرَیْش.

This religion will always remain honorable and protected from the enemies under the [leadership of twelve persons, all of whom belong to the Quraish . [۱۱۶

Brief description

Clear and explicit traditions are narrated in respect of the twelve successors of the Prophet (s . a . w . a .) in the most creditable books of the sunnites including �sahih bokhari�, �sahih moslem� . �sahih termazi�, �sahih abou dawood�, �masoud ahmad� and many others . The total number of these traditions narrated by shiites and sunnites are estimated to be ۲۷۱ ! And it is interesting to note that the profile

of successors per these traditions fits only the twelve shiite imams . Neither the first four caliphs nor the umayyid or abbasid caliphs meet the specifications of this .tradition

And so the sunnite scholars have gotten into difficulty in interpretation of this valid tradition whereas its interpretation is crystal clear for the shiite followers of . Prophet�s household

Lesson One Hundred Twenty

Sinful Feast

: Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says

لَا يَنْبَغِى لِلْمُؤْمِنِ اَنْ يَجْلِسَ مَجْلِسًا يُعْصَى اللهُ فِيْهِ وَ لَا يَقْدِرُ عَلَى تَغْيِيْرِهِ.

It is unjust for believers to participate in a feast where sin is performed and they do [nothing to change the situation . [١١٧

Brief description

Even if one does not commit the sin and does not cooperate with participants of the feast, participation in a sinful feast is itself a sin . It amounts to endorsing a sin unless one participates in order to remedy the situation and perform the critical duty of . enjoining good and forbidding evil

Furthermore, when a person keeps observing sinful scenes with indifference and without protest, it darkens his spirit and decreases his sensitivity so that sins no . longer appear so bad to him and this can lead him to commit sins

Lesson One Hundred Twenty One

Do Productive Works

: Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says

اِزْرَعُوْا وَ اَغْرِسُوْا وَ اللهِ مَا عَمِلَ النَّاسُ عَمَلاً اَحَلَّ وَ لَا اَطْيَبَ مِنْهُ.

Cultivate and plant trees . By God, people have not done any action more lawful and purer than this . [118]

Brief description

Man�s life is based on productive works, including agriculture and various forms of business and industry . Most industries would not be meaningful without agriculture because they gain their raw materials from it . In addition, agriculture is less prone to frauds and trickery because its results are governed mainly by natural factors and sincere efforts of men . On this account, cultivation and tree planting is called the most pure and

. pleasant work in the above tradition

Lesson One Hundred Twenty Two

Lifespan

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

مَوْتُ الْإِنْسَانِ بِالذُّنُوْبِ اَكْثَرُ مِنْ مَوْتِهِ بِالاَجَلِ وَ حَيَاتُهُ بِالْبِرِّ اَكْثَرُ مِنْ حَيَاتِهِ بِالْعُمْرِ.

Early death of men is more often due to sin than for natural reasons, and long life of [individuals is more often due to their righteousness than for natural reasons . [۱۱۹

Brief description

Undoubtedly, a lot of sins and bad habits have a direct impact on shortening life (as in the case of drinking, gambling, jealousy, envy and vindictiveness) . Many also shorten it through indirect means such as the resulting social disorders, lack of public security and occurrence of wars (as in the case of usury, injustice and oppression) . On the other hand, righteousness could lead to a long life due to its deep effect on the peace . of spirit and conscience

Therefore, sin, besides its harmful spiritual effects, is also very effective in shortening man�s life, whereas righteousness prolongs life in addition to generating other . benefits and spiritual rewards

Lesson One Hundred Twenty Three

! Cooperation with Satan

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

لاَ تَسُبَّنَّ اِبْلِيسَ فِى الْعَلاَنِيَهِ وَ اَنْتَ صَدِيْقُهُ فِى السِّرِ.

[Do not curse satan publicly, while you are his friend inwardly . [۱۲۰

Brief description

Some people proclaim their disdain and distance themselves verbally from things like . poverty, hypocrisy, satan and such like, while in practice they are drowned in them

We know of rich men who live like the poor for the fear of becoming poor if they spent more . We know hypocrites who repeatedly curse the hypocrites, when their own life

. is full of hypocrisy

We know devilish people who say publicly : �I take refuge in God from satan, the outcast� . And yet, they are his friends inwardly and give much importance to their devilish activities . Their words are devoid of substance and contradict their inner reality.

Lesson One Hundred Twenty Four

! Take Counsel to be Guided

: Imam Hasan (a . s .) says

مَا تَشَاوَرَ قَوْمٌ اِلاَّ هُدُوَا اِلىٰ رُشْدِهِمْ.

Nations in which consultation with each other is practised, are always guided to their welfare and benefit . [۱۲۱]

Brief description

Group work always produces synergystic benefits, improvement and development . When many heads come together, their collective experience and knowledge can be tapped to facilitate planning, problem solving, productivity, creativity and innovation .

Those who have become self-opinionated and obstinate often suffer from mistakes and losses . Everyone has unique mental powers . One mind may produce a brain wave that would never occur to another . When the bright ideas of many minds combine, they would produce a light that can illuminate any darkness . Let us all decide to adopt the practice of always consulting with informed and intelligent persons .

Lesson One Hundred Twenty Five

Salam, Islamic Salutation

: Imam Husain (a . s .) says

تِسْعٌ وَ سِتُّوْنَ لِلْمُبْتَدی وَ وَاحِدَةٌ لِلْرَّادِّ لِلسَّلامِ سَبْعُوْنَ حَسَنَةٌ.

Salam (salutation) has ۷۰ rewards, ۶۹ parts of which are for one who salutes and one [part of which is for one who returns the salutation . [۱۲۲

Brief description

Among the salutations of various nations, �salam�, the Islamic salutation and greeting, has a special luminosity, because it indicates both welcoming and peace, pleasure and friendship, and also a wish for peace from God for the other party . For this reason, salutation of the people of paradise is salam, and angels of mercy receive the virtuous and good-doers with salam . Unfortunately, some egoistic moslems think that

not saluting (or not being the first to salute) reflects their high status and saluting reduces their rank . Thus they deprive themselves of the great reward mentioned in the above tradition especially for those who show humility by taking the initiative to .salute first

Lesson One Hundred Twenty Six

Non Conformity of Belief with Action

: Imam Ali ibne Husain (a . s .) says

اَبْغَضُ النَّاسِ اِلَى اللهِ مَنْ يَقْتَدِي بِسُنَّهِ اِمَامٍ وَ لاَ يَقْتَدِي اَلاَ وَ اِنَّ بِاَعْمَالِهِ.

The most hated people before God are those who have accepted leadership of an [imam but do not follow his actions . [۱۲۳

Brief description

One of the major faults of man is non conformity of his belief and actions . He says he . believes in something, but no trace of that belief is observed in his actions

He believes in God, but he does not practice the discipline required in his daily life to make his deeds consitent with that belief . He believes in the great court of God, but . has not prepared himself to face it

He believes in Prophet Mohammad (s . a . w . a .) as the greatest prophet and Imam Ali (a . s .) as the highest leader, but he does not demonstrate any similarity with them by . his actions . In short, his belief points in one direction, and his action in another

Lesson One Hundred Twenty Seven

! Divine Chastisement

: Imam Baqer (a . s .) says

اِنَّ لِلّهِ عُقُوبَاتٌ فِی الْقُلُوْبِ وَ الْاَبْدَانَ ضَنْکٌ فِی الْمَعْیشَهِ وَ وَهْنٌ فِی الْعِبَادَهِ وَمَا ضُرِبَ عَبْدٌ بِعُقُوْبَه اَعْظَمُ مِنْ قَسْوَهِ الْقَلْبِ.

God chastises man (for sins and disobedience) through the spirit and the body : indigence in livelihood, indolence in worship, but God has not punished any servant [with something worse than hard- heartedness . [۱۲۴

Brief description

Divine chastisements are indeed reflections of

man�s actions as well as the consequences of his sins . Sometimes they appear as an unpleasant situation in material life and sometimes in spiritual matters such as the lack of enthusiasm for worship and invocation to God . But the worst punishment meted out is that of making a person hard-hearted . The heart becomes devoid of humanitarian feelings, philanthropy and sympathy, and leads to perpetration of .cruelty and many other sins

Lesson One Hundred Twenty Eight

A Forgotten Reality

:Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says

لَمْ يَخْلُقِ اللهُ يَقِيْنًا لَاشَكَّ فِيْهِ اَشْبَهُ بِشَكٍّ لَا يَقِيْنَ فِيْهِ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ.

God has not created a certainty as doubt-free as death, but (going by man�s attitude towards death) it seems as if it is a doubtful thing in which there is never any certainty [.[۱۲۵

Brief description

What a strange phrase, and what a clear interpretation of man�s lack of attention to .the inevitable end of his life

Man can have doubts about anything and may not believe in any religion, but he cannot doubt the fact that sooner or later his life will end and meet he must with .death

Yet, surprisingly, his lifestyle conveys the impression that he is unconcerned and !unaware of death as if he was immortal

Thus, he does not prepare himself for receiving it with faith, good deeds, purity and .virtue

Let us be realistic and accept that one is bound to die and it can happen at any time . That being the case, we must keep ourselves pure and prepared at all times

. to avoid regret and shame when death does catch up with us

Lesson One Hundred Twenty Nine

Place of Knowledge and Wisdom

: Imam Kazem (a . s .) says

اِنَّ الزَّرْعَ يَنْبُتُ فِى السَّهْلِ وَ لاَ يَنْبُتُ فِى الصَّفَا فَكَذٰلِكَ الْحِكْمَةُ تَعْمُرُ فِى قَلْبِ الْمُتَوَاضِعِ وَ لاَ تَعْمُرُ فِى قَلْبِ الْمُتَكَبِّرِ الْجَبَّارِ.

Cultivation grows on soft land, not on the stones ! And similarly knowledge and wisdom sprout on the heart of modest people, not on the heart of the unjust arrogant [persons ! [۱۲۶

Brief description

The first step in acquiring knowledge is humility - humility towards truth, humility towards the teacher and anyone who knows more than us and could teach us . something

For this reason, ignorance and arrogance usually go hand in hand . Arrogant ones never admit their ignorance, and if a reality happens to be different from that which serves their pride and arrogance, they would deny it and oppose it . They do not . accept the truth from anyone and remain engulfed in their ignorance

Lesson One Hundred Thirty

Heavy Duties of Imam

: Imam Reza (a . s .) says

اَلْإمَامُ اَمِيْنُ اللهِ فِى اَرْضِهِ وَ خَلْقِهِ وَ حُجَّتُهُ عَلَى عِبَادِهِ وَ خَلِيْفَتُهُ فِى بِلاَدِهِ وَ الدَّاعِى اِلَى اللهِ وَ الذابُّ عَنْ حَرِيمِ اللهِ.

Imam is the trustee of God on earth and among His people, and His proof for the servants and His representative in the cities and summoner towards Him and [protector of divine sanctuaries . [۱۲۷

Brief description

In this tradition, which is part of a detailed tradition on the concept of imamate, reference is made to five aspects of the heavy and important duties of an imam:

١. Imam is

a treasurer and trustee of revelation and protector of all sciences, commands and .knowledge of religion

.Imam is a living proof and introducer of divine religion . ۲

Imam is a divinely appointed supervisor and authority and God�s representative . ۳ .among people

Imam is the one who calls people towards goodness and forbids evil and is the . ۴ .greatest emissary of religion

.Imam is a protector of divine sanctuaries against the invasion of enemies . ۵

To carry out such tasks requires someone who has access to divine knowledge and is infallible . True imams are the ones with these qualities and nobody except God can .appoint them

Lesson One Hundred Thirty One

.Piety Opens all Doors

:Imam Mohammad Taqi (Javad) (a .s .) says

لَوْ كَانَتِ السَّمَاوَاتُ وَ الْاَرْضُ رَتْقًا عَلَى عَبْد ثُمَّ اتَّقِى الله تَعَالَى جَعَلَ اللهُ لَهُ مِنْهَا مَخْرَجًا.

If the doors of heavens and earth are closed to someone, and he then adopts piety, [God shall provide relief to him . [۱۲۸

Brief description

Sometimes in life all doors are closed to man and wherever he turns, he finds himself .surrounded by problems and difficulties

Such events in fact present an opportunity . They are a wake-up call, reminding him of realities of life and coaxing him to change direction, take corrective actions and return to the right path prescribed by God . At this time, if he reverts to God with sincerity and full concentration and seeks assistance from His pure essence, divine assistance shall

be given to him, breezes of God�s mercy

. would embrace him and the closed doors would be opened in wonderful ways

Lesson One Hundred Thirty Two

! Beware of mean people

: Imam Ali ebne Mohammad Taqi (a . s .) says

مَنْ هَانَتْ عَلَيْهِ نَفْسُهُ فَلاَ تَأْمَنْ شَرَّهُ.

[Beware of malady of one who does not assume a dignity for himself ! [۱۲۹

Brief description

In fact, one of the most important factors preventing corruption and malevolence is dignity or at least a feeling of dignity . Dignified people or those who assume a dignity for themselves even though others do not consider them dignified, tend to avoid evils and bad deeds in order to preserve their status . But those who feel that they do not have any reputation, respect and dignity, would heed nothing . Hence the need to be ! wary of such people

For this reason, one of the important goals of education especially for children is to inculcate in them the awareness of dignity and a feeling that they possess a special . dignity

Lesson One Hundred Thirty Three

Greater Jihad

: Imam Hasan Askari (a . s .) says

اَشَدُّ النَّاسِ اِجْتِهَادًا مَنْ تَرَکَ الذُّنُوْبَ.

[The strongest warrior for the faith among people is one who gives up the sins . [۱۳۰

Brief description

We know that struggle against one�s rebellious and sensual desires that lead to sins

is called the �greater jihad� in Islam, being more important and valuable than struggle with enemies . This warfare is the means of purification of the soul and requires a strong will to achieve victory.

In societies stained with sin, the value of this warfare is more obvious and its importance in achievement of social objectives cannot be denied.

Victories

of the Prophet (s . a . w . a .) in Medina were actually the direct result of purification of souls and spiritual struggles of his companions .

Lesson One Hundred Thirty Four

Occultation of Mahdi (a . s .)

Imam Mahdi (a . s .) says :

اَمَّا الْحَوَادِثُ الْوَاقِعَهُ فَارْجِعُوْا فِيْهَا اِلَى رُوَاهِ اَحادِيْثِنَا.

In the various events happening during the major occultation, refer to the narrator of our traditions . [١٣١]

Brief description

Human societies cannot be optimally organized without proper leadership . For this reason, God has never left his servants without a leader . Divine leaders have always existed among them .

Even during the occultation of Imam Mahdi (a . s .), may our soul be sacrificed for him, first special deputies, and after termination of their period, common deputies were selected by him for leadership of people . The leadership continues to be provided by those determined and faithful men who are well versed in the knowledge of Islam�s holy book, the quran, as well as the teachings and practices of the Prophet (s . a . w . a .) and the school of the Prophet�s household . Anyone who does not possess such credentials, under whatever name and title, who assumes himself to be worthy of such a rank, must be rejected .

Lesson One Hundred Thirty Five

Source of Evils

The Prophet (s . a . w . a .) says :

اِجْتَنِبِ الْخَمْرَ فَاِنَّهَا مِفْتَاحُ كُلِّ شَرٍّ.

[Avoid wine which is the key of all evils . [۱۳۲

Brief description

Many books and articles have been written in respect of the harmful effects of wine, including fatal effects on the nervous and digestive systems and the heart, arteries, liver, kidneys and other organs of body . Its painful

social and economic consequences and shocking statistics have been investigated by thousands of scientists and contemplative minds . However, no phrase could be found as short, yet so comprehensive, as the valuable tradition of our Prophet which, in one .short sentence, says it all

.Yes, wine is indeed the key of all evils, obscenities and misfortunes

Lesson One Hundred Thirty Six

Fulfillment of Obligations

مَنْ عَمِلَ بِمَا افْتَرَضَ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ فَهُوَ مِنْ اَعْبَدِ النَّاسِ.

[Whoever fulfils his obligations, will be among the most devout worshippers . [۱۳۳

Brief description

Worship is neither restricted to serving the people, nor to praying and fasting . Rather, the greatest worship is that one should fulfil his obligatory duties in all areas of life . Which worship is higher and more manifest than the one which could change a society into a flower garden where goodness and prosperity abound . Fulfillment of obligations has a wide scope that includes obligations related to worship as well as to soceity, humanity, economic and other necessities of life . Those who are neglectful of their necessary obligations and yet consider themselves as highly devoted to Islam .are under a serious delusion

Lesson One Hundred Thirty Seven

Inhabitants of Stars

:Imam Ali (a . s .) says

هٰذِهِ النُّجُوْمُ الَّتِی فِی السَّمَاءِ مَدَائِنٌ مِثْلُ الْمَدَائِنِ الَّتِی فِی الْاَرْضِ مَرْبُوْطَةٌ كُلُّ مَدِیْنَه اِلیٰ عَمُود مِنْ نُوْر.

These stars in the heaven are cities like the cities of earth . Each of the cities is [connected (with the other cities) through a column of light . [۱۳۴

Brief description

It is very selfish to suppose that our earth is the only inhabitable planet and millions of . other celestial planets are all unutilized, silent and without any inhabitant

Today, we know of detailed scientific studies into the conditions required for life to exist on other planets which suggest that millions and millions of these may be inhabited and it is likely that many of them may enjoy more

developed civilizations because life had started there thousands or millions of years before it did on the earth . Such scientific knowledge did not exist fourteen centuries ago and hence the above tradition of Imam Ali (a . s .) is nothing less than a miracle .

Lesson One Hundred Thirty Eight

Quran and The Law of Gravity

Imam Reza (a . s .) says to one of his friends :

اَلَيْسَ اللهُ يَقُوْلُ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا فَقُلْتُ: بَلىٰ قَالَ: ثُمَّ عَمَدٌ، لٰكِنْ، لاَ تَرَوْنَهَا.

Does God not say that heaven is erected upon an invisible pillar ? I said : yes . He said : so there is an invisible pillar that you do not see . [۱۳۵]

Brief description

Nowadays, it has been proved that celestial bodies are fixed in their circuits thanks to the balance of gravity and repulsive forces . Gravity attracts them towards each other like a great chain, and repulsive force separates them from each other and their complete balance enables them to revolve in their circuit without any change and deviation, suspended in the immense space on this invisible pillar . Was there any interpretation more eloquent than the above for expressing this reality in that time when these mysteries were not yet solved ? And isn�t this one of the scientific miracles of our great leaders .

Lesson One Hundred Thirty Nine

Mystery of Mountains !

Imam Ali (a . s .) says :

وَ وَتَّدَ بِالصُّخُوْرِ مَيَدَانَ اَرْضِهِ.

Shaking and movement of the earth is prevented by mountains . [۱۳۶]

Brief description

Nowadays, it has been confirmed that just as the gravity of the moon effects the ebb and flow of seas (producing high tides twice a day, raising the water level one meter or more and even ۱۵ meters in some parts) it also causes up and down movement of ۳۰ centimeters in the solid crust of the earth.

But solidity of earth�s crust due to existence of mountains, the roots of which are connected to each other creating a stabilising network round the earth, prevents any .noticable movement

Just imagine ! if there were no mountains and earth�s crust was not solid, and in a state of continual flux and reflux, what would happen to our quiet and peace on this ?earth

Here is another example of Islamic leaders mentioning scientific facts ۱۴ centuries .ago which science has discovered much later

Lesson One Hundred Forty

Microscopic Creatures

:Imam Reza (a . s .) says

اِنَّما قُلْنا (الَّطِيْفُ) لِلْخَلْقِ اللَّطِيْفِ... وَمَا لاَ يَكَادُ عُيُوْنُنا تَسْتَبِيْنَهُ لِدِمامَهِ خَلْقِهَا، لاَ تَرَاهُ عُيُوْنُنا وَ لاَ تَلْمُسُهُ اَيْدِيْنَا.

We say God is All-subtle due to His creation of very fine, minute creatures; so small [that we cannot see them and our hand does not feel them . [۱۳۷

Brief description

What you see above is a small part of a long tradition which Fat�h ebne Yazid Gorgani has narrated from Imam Reza (a . s .), in which it is described that �these animals are so tiny that they are never felt, and are scattered among the waves of .�the seas and barks of trees, and deserts and plains

This is a miraculous tradition from our Imam dating back about one thousand years which means hundreds of years before the discoveries of microbiology founder Louis .(Pasteur (۱۸۲۲-۱۸۹۵ AD

Lesson One Hundred Forty One

Only a name from Islam

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

يَأْتِي عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ لاَ يَبْقى فِيْهِمْ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ اِلاَّ رَسْمُهُ وَ مِنَ الْاِسْلاَمِ اِلاَّ اِسْمُهُ، مَسَاجِدُهُم، يَوْمَئِذ عَامَرَةٌ مِنَ الْبِنَاءِ، خَرَابٌ مِنَ الْهُدَى.

A day will come for people when only letters and drawings from Quran and Islam in name only will remain among them . Moslems� mosques will be improved as regards the building structure and ruined as regards the guidance they provide . [۱۳۸]

Brief description

We cannot say whether this interesting prediction has already materialised fully in this present time or is yet to happen in future . But surely we are witnessing some examples

of it here and there . It is surprising that in such cases the moslems complain about their backwardness when they themselves have caused it by their mistaken notion that it is sufficient to adopt muslim names and pay a nominal lip service to Islam, and that quran is there only for decorative purposes . They have not accepted quran�s real role as a �book� of unbeatable value for education, training and application in day to day life . Nor have they accepted Islam as a �school� that must engage and permeate their practical and intellectual lives . Can you find a real Islamic soceity (which follows Islam in substance, not just in form), which has been backward or has ? not enjoyed an honourable status in the world

Lesson One Hundred Forty Two

Criterion for Assessment of Intellect and Ignorance

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

اَللِّسانُ مِعْيارُ اِطَاشَهِ الْجهْلِ وَ اَرْجِحَهِ الْعَقْلِ.

Tongue is the criterion for assessment of insolence or ignorance and the scale of [intellect and wisdom . [١٣٩

Brief description

Tongue is the most important window to man�s soul, the key to understanding his personality, and the best means for assessment of the degree of his intellect . Through a simple and seemingly unimportant rotation, this tongue of ours unveils the . curtains and reveals the inner realities of man�s soul

For this reason, many Islamic instructions are focused on correction of tongue and we are admonished frequently by our great leaders to be careful in what we say . It is true that complete correction of tongue

is not possible without correction of soul and mind, but we can avoid a lot of painful consequences of inappropriate movements of tongue through silence and self-control in our speech.

Lesson One Hundred Forty Three

Higher than Favor

Imam Hadi (a.s.) says:

اَلشّاكِرُ اَسْعَدُ بِالشُّكْرِ مِنْهُ بِالنِّعْمهِ الَّتى اَوْجَبَتِ الشُّكْرَ لِاَنَّ النِّعَمَ مَتاعٌ وَ الشُّكْرَ نِعَمٌ وَ عُقْبى.

One who is grateful for a favor derives more prosperity from his gratefulness than from the favor, because favors pertain to life in this world whereas gratitude is the capital of this world and the other world. [۱۴۰]

Brief description

Gratitude is more than mere appreciation by tongue; it includes actions that demonstrate appreciation in practical terms and it involves using each favor in a proper way. Such gratitude for a favor results in blessings and prosperity far greater than that provided by the favor itself. Using the favors for seeking God�s pleasure and meeting His servants� needs is a capital that earns honor in this world as well as eternal prosperity in the hereafter, while a favor itself may confer only a material blessing.

In other words, when one receives a favor, he receives something useful for this world and if he shows gratitude for it in appropriate ways, he then receives something additional which is even better: additional rewards both for this world and the hereafter.

Lesson One Hundred Forty Four

Revival of Doctrine of the Prophet�s Household

Imam Reza (a.s.) says:

مَنْ جَلَسَ مَجْلِسًا يُحيى فِيْهِ اَمْرُنَا لَمْ يَمُتْ قَلْبُهُ يَوْمَ تَمُوْتُ الْقُلُوْبُ.

One who participates in a meeting in which our doctrine is revived, his heart shall not die when the hearts die ! [١۴١]

Brief description

It is clearly inferred from the above sentence that the

followers of the Prophet�s household are duty bound to revive the ideas and practices of the pure household by understanding their doctrine, perceiving the spirit of their speeches, and becoming familiar with their instructions . They should not allow their meetings to degenerate into channels of amusements and gossip or harping on their needs and personal problems and desires . Instead, they should concentrate on higher human and social concerns with efforts directed at inculcating correct Islamic values, beliefs and practices . Such meetings will revive hearts and .awaken the thoughts

Lesson One Hundred Forty Five

Trust in Respect of Keeping Secrets

:Holy Prophet (s . a . w . a .) says

اِذَا حَدَّثَ الرَّجُلُ بِحَدِيْثَ، ثُمَّ الْتَفَتَ فَهِىَ اَمَانَةٌ.

When somebody says something and looks around himself, his speech is a trust and [secret (and we shall try to keep it) . [۱۴۲

Brief description

Trust has different forms in Islam, including faithfulness in keeping people�s secrets . This is considered so important in Islam�s view that disclosing a person�s secret is considered as one of the capital sins . Moreover, for something to count as a secret, it is not necessary that the speaker has said that it is a secret and requested that it be kept a secret . Rather, the least sign or hint is sufficient for understanding this reality . If, before speaking, somebody looks around himself to see if another person is within hearing distance, this would be adequate to give rise to the trust so that it becomes obligatory to treat what he says

.as a secret of a moslem brother

Lesson One Hundred Forty Six

Signs of a Believer

:Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says

اِذَا سَرَّتْکَ حَسَنَتُکَ وَ سَائَتْکَ سَیِّئَتُکَ فَاَنْتَ مُؤْمِنٌ.

When your good deed makes you happy and your bad deed disturbs you, you are a .believer

Brief description

Islam says that all men are born with a pure primordial nature, which believes in and loves to do good. Taints and sins begin to gradually affect his spirit and soul and change his nature and in time turn it totally. When you see that a man is interested in goodness and hates bad deeds, you know that the spirit of belief and first pure nature .still exist in him

What a miserable lot are those who, instead of being disturbed by their bad deeds, take pleasure in them, or who are resentful of their deeds of self-sacrifice, .righteousness, forgiveness and justice. They are the unbelievers

Lesson One Hundred Forty Seven

First Prerequiste for Any Work

:Imam Ali (a.s.) says to Komeil

مَا مِنْ حَرَکه اِلَّا وَ اَنْتَ مُحْتَاجٌ فِیهَا اِلَی مَعْرِفَه.

There is no movement or work that does not need insight, familiarity and knowledge [for its performance. [۱۴۳

Brief description

If we reflect on the wide scope of the words �no movement�used above, we will understand how all-encompassing the religion of Islam is . It is not merely a series of worship rituals and invocations or a set of beliefs without practical applications . Rather it provides a complete code of life for all personal and social concerns and endeavors, and its starting

point is intelligence and knowledge of realities . It considers all movement and effort as fruitless or at best ineffective if it lacks adequate knowledge and correct guidance .

Lesson One Hundred Forty Eight

Importance of a Guest

The Prophet (s . a . w . a .) said :

إِذَا اَرَادَ اللهُ بِقَوْمٍ خَيْرًا اَهْدَى اِلَيْهِمْ هَدِيَّةً قَالُوْا وَ مَا تِلْكَ الْهَدِيَّه؟ قَالَ اَلضَّيْفُ.

When God wills happiness and prosperity for a nation, he will bestow on them a gift . They asked : �what is that gift� . He replied : �guest� . [۱۴۴]

Brief description

That is true . Guest is a gift from God, a valuable and honorable gift . But the material world, in which all affections are lost, has no value for a guest . It treats him as troublsome and strange and unwelcome . So it rarely happens that someone invites another or gets invited unless there is a selfish reason relating to business or wealth or politics .

In the Islamic countries and families in which religious customs are still alive, a guest is honored and respected as a divine gift notwithstanding the absence of family relationship or any ulterior motives .

Lesson One Hundred Forty Nine

Respect and Affection

Imam Sadeq (a . s .) says :

لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ لَمْ يُوَقِّرْ كَبِيْرَنَا وَ لَمْ يَرْحَمْ صَغِيْرَنَا.

One who does not respect the elders and does not show affection to the children, does not belong to us . [۱۴۵]

Brief description

Human societies are like an extensive caravan which is continuously moving . The infants are born and children grow up and adults become old and the old die and nobody is excepted from passing these stages.

The older ones are more experienced and have deeper insight . The conscientious ones among them have

contributed to soceity through numerous services during their life . All this supports . the argument that they should be respected by the youth and adolescents

And since children are at the beginning stage of their life, tender, innocent and impressionable, they should be treated with love and affection . Foundations of their character and prosperity should be constructed lovingly by the adults . These are the . ways and customs of a humanitarian and progressive society

Lesson One Hundred Fifty

Provide for yourself in the Next World in Advance

: Imam Ali (a . s .) says

مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَبْقَ لَکَ ذُخْرُهُ وَ مَا تُؤَخِّرُهُ يَكُنْ لِغَيْرِکَ خَيْرُهُ.

Whatsoever you send in advance shall be reserved for you and whatsoever you postpone, its benefit would be only for the others (and its responsibility is your [burden) . [۱۴۶

Brief description

Mammonism is found in today�s world more than before . The main objective and . philosophy of wealth is not considered

Those who amass wealth madly, employing every means, howsoever illegitimate or unjust, fail to understand that they can neither consume all this wealth during their lifetime nor can they take it with them when they die . On the contrary, they will leave it for others to enjoy while they are left carrying a heavy responsibility and accountability for it in the divine court . What a loss ! What a contrast to those who acquire only legitimate wealth and send it in advance as provisions for their next . world by spending it in Allah�s way

endnote

Kaafi, first Vol . , pg . ۳۶ and Tohaful Oqool [۱]

From the book Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۲۶۷ [۲]

. Safinatul Behaar, article of taste [۳]

. Laataef and Zaraef [۴]

Usoole Kaafi, Vol . two, pg . ۷ [۵]

. Nahjul Fasahaah [۶]

. Behaarul Anwaar, Vol . ۷۸, pg . ۵۹ and Tohaful Oqool, p . ۱۵۸ [۷]

. Behaarul Anwaar, Vol . ۱ [۸]

. Behaarul Anwaar, Vol . ۷۳, pg . ۲۲۵ [۹]

Ashahab Fel Hekam Val Adab�, pg . ۲۲� [۱۰]

Mustadrekul [۱۱]

. Wasaael, Vol . ۲, pg . ۲۱۷

. Safinatul Behaar [۱۲]

. Behaarul Anwaar, Vol . ۷۳, pg . ۲۷۸ [۱۳]

. Nahjul Fasahaah [۱۴]

. Wasaaelush Shia, vol . ۱۲, p . ۴۲۶ ۴۲۷ [۱۵]

. Behaarul Anwaar, Vol . ۷۲, pg . ۳۰۰ [۱۶]

. Behaarul Anwaar, Vol . ۷۳, pg . ۲۵۵ [۱۷]

. Behaarul Anwaar, Vol . ۱۰۳, pg . ۶۵ [۱۸]

Gorarul Hekam [۱۹]

. Nahjul Fasahaah [۲۰]

. Safinatul Behaar [۲۱]

. Behaarul Anwaar, Vol . ۲, pg . ۳۸ [۲۲]

. Behaarul Anwaar, Vol . ۱۰۳, pg . ۱۴۱ [۲۳]

. Wasaaelush Shia, Vol . ۶, pg . ۲ [۲۴]

. Wasaaelush Shia, Vol . ۲, pg . ۲۲۳ [۲۵]

. Irshaadul Qoloob [۲۶]

. Behaarul Anwaar book, Vol . ۱۵ [۲۷]

. Nahjul Balaaghah, Sermon ۳۱ [۲۸]

. Nahjul Balaaghah, aphorisms [۲۹]

(. Speeches of Mohammad (s . a . w . a [۳۰]

[۳۱] Tohaful Oqool

[۳۲] Nahjul Balaaghah, Aphorisms

[۳۳] Islam in the center of society.

[۳۴] Wasaaelush Shia

[۳۵] Wasaaelush Shia, Vol. ۱, pg. ۷۳

[۳۶] Wasaaelush Shia, Vol. ۱, pg. ۳۵۸

[۳۷] Muntahal A�amaal

[۳۸] Muntahal A�amaal

[۳۹] Wasaaelush Shia, Vol. ۱, pg. ۹۱۵

[۴۰] Aqwaalul Aimmah, Vol. ۱, pg. ۲۱۴

[۴۱] Safinatul Behaar, Vol. ۱, pg. ۳۷

[۴۲] Nahjul Balaaghah, Aphorisms

[۴۳] Safinatul Behaar.

[۴۴] from first Vol. of Safinatul Behaar.

[۴۵] Nahjul Balaaghah, aphorisms.

[۴۶] Behaarul Anwaar, Vol. ۷۰, pg. ۱۰۷

[۴۷] Misbaahul Shariah, pg. ۴۵.

[۴۸] Safinatul Behaar, article fraud.

[۴۹] Nahjul Balaaghah, aphorisms

[۵۰] Nahjul Balaaghah, aphorisms.

Nahjul Fasahaah [۵۱]

Usoole Kaafi, Vol . ۲ [۵۲]

Safinatul Behaar, Vol . one, pg . ۷۲۰ [۵۳]

,Behaarul Anwaar [۵۴]

Vol . ۴۵, pg . ۸۰

Gorarul Hekam [۵۵]

Behaarul Anwaar, Vol . ۱۰, pg . ۱۹۸ [۵۶]

Behaarul Anwaar, Vol . ۲۳ [۵۷]

Nahjul Balaaghah, aphorisms [۵۸]

Behaarul Anwaar, Vol . ۷۴, pg . ۲۸۶ [۵۹]

Gorarul Hekam, pg . ۲۸۹ [۶۰]

. Majma�ul Bayaan, interpretation of repentance sura [۶۱]

Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۳۶۶ [۶۲]

Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۳۰۷ [۶۳]

Aqwaalul Aimmah [۶۴]

Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۳۰۵ [۶۵]

Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۳۶۱ [۶۶]

Kaafi, Vol . ۲, pg . ۱۶۶ [۶۷]

Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۲۷۴ [۶۸]

Nahjul Balaaghah, Aphorisms [۶۹]

Tohaful Oqool [۷۰]

Gorarul Hekam, article three [۷۱]

(Wasaaelush Shia�, (as per narration from Aqwaalul Aimmah, Vol . ۲, pg . ۲۷۷ [۷۲]

Safinatul Behaar [۷۳]

[۷۴] Usoole Kaafi, Vol . ۲, pg . ۳۰۰

[۷۵] Nahjul Balaaghah, letter ۵۳

[۷۶] Tohaful Oqool

[۷۷] Behaarul Anwaar, Vol . ۵۲, pg . ۹۲

[۷۸] Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۳۳۹

[۷۹] Behaarul Anwaar, Vol . ۷۴, pg . ۱۴۷

[۸۰] Nahjul Balaaghah, aphorisms of wisdom ۴۲۸

[۸۱] Mohajjatul Baiza, Vol . ۶, pg . ۳۱۲

[۸۲] Tohaful Oqool

[۸۳] Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۲۰۱

[۸۴] Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۱۷۷

[۸۵] Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۳۳۴ .

[۸۶] Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۳۳

[۸۷] Safinatul Behaar, Vol . one, pg . ۲۱۳

[۸۸] from the book Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۲۰۱

[۸۹] from the book Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۲۰۳

[۹۰] from the book Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۹۷۷

[۹۱] Nahjul Balaaghah, aphorisms, utterance no . ۶

[۹۲] from the book Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۱۶۵

[۹۳] Behaarul Anwaar, Vol . ۱۷, pg . ۲۱۷

[۹۴] maghtalel Husain, pg . ۲۴۶ ۲۵۶

[۹۵] Nahjul Balaaghah, aphorism

[۹۶] Nahjul Balaaghah, aphorisms, phrase ۱۷۲

[۹۷] Nahjul Fasahaah, pg . ۱۵

[۹۸] Nahjul Fasahaah, pg . ۵۶۴

[۹۹]

Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۳۲

Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۳۶۸ [۱۰۰]

from the book Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۲۹۶ [۱۰۱]

Gorarul Hekam, pg . ۳۹۳ [۱۰۲]

Nahjul Fasahaah [۱۰۳]

Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۲۶۸ [۱۰۴]

Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۱۱۷ [۱۰۵]

Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۲۷۱ [۱۰۶]

Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۲۷۰ [۱۰۷]

Safinatul Behaar, Vol . two, pg . ۴۱۳ [۱۰۸]

�Safinatul Behaar, Vol . ۲, article �sensual desire [۱۰۹]

Behaarul Anwaar, Vol . ۱۵, pg . ۱۶۴ [۱۱۰]

Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۶۳ [۱۱۱]

Safinatul Behaar, Vol . ۲, pg . ۲۲۱ [۱۱۲]

Safinatul Behaar, Vol . ۲, pg . ۱۹۵ [۱۱۳]

Nahjul Fasahaah, pg . ۴۹۰ [۱۱۴]

Nahjul Fasahaah, pg . ۴۰۶ [۱۱۵]

. Tisiral Vosoul, written by Zobeidi Shafei [۱۱۶]

Usoole Kaafi, Vol . ۲, pg . ۳۷۴ [۱۱۷]

Safinatul Behaar, Vol . ۱, pg . ۵۴۹ [۱۱۸]

[۱۱۹] Safinatul Behaar, pg . ۴۸۹

[۱۲۰] Torasul Aimmah, pg . ۲۰۹

[۱۲۱] Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۱۶۴

[۱۲۲] Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۱۷۷

[۱۲۳] Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۲۰۲

[۱۲۴] Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۲۱۷

[۱۲۵] Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۲۷۱

[۱۲۶] Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۲۹۶

[۱۲۷] Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۳۲۸

[۱۲۸] Noorul Absaar, pg . ۱۵۰

[۱۲۹] Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۳۶۲

[۱۳۰] Behaarul Anwaar, Vol . ۷۸, pg . ۳۷۳

[۱۳۱] a part of famous decree mentioned in different books

[۱۳۲] Nahjul Fasahaah, pg . ۱

[۱۳۳] Wasaaelush Shia� . Volume ۱۱, pg . ۲۰۶

[۱۳۴] Safinatul Behaar, Vol . ۳, pg . ۵۷۴

[۱۳۵] Al-Burhaan fi Tafseer Al-Qur�an, Vol . ۳, pg . ۲۷۸

[۱۳۶] Nahjul Balaaghah, sermon ۱

[۱۳۷] Al-Waafi, Vol . one, pg . ۱۰۶

[۱۳۸] Nahjul Balaghah, Aphorisms, word ۳۶۹

[۱۳۹] Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۱۴۳

[۱۴۰] Tohaful Oqool, pg . ۳۶۲

[۱۴۱] Torasul Aimmah, pg

۴۴۳ .

[۱۴۲] Nahjul Fasahaah, pg . ۳۸

[۱۴۳] Safinatul Behaar, Vol . one, pg . ۱۵

[۱۴۴] Behaarul Anwaar, Vol . ۱۵, pg . ۲۴۱

[۱۴۵] Usoole Kaafi, pg . ۲۵۳ .

[۱۴۶] Nahjul Balaaghah

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ٩

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ٢٠٠٧, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

Holding book reading competitions-

Producing virtual, three dimensional exhibitions, panoramas of religious and tourism- places

.Producing animations, computer games and etc-

Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com-

Fabricatingdramatic and speech works-

Launching the system of answering religious, ethical and doctrinal questions-

Designing systems of accounting, media and mobile, automatic and handy systems,- web kiosks

Holding virtual educational courses for the public-

Holding virtual teacher-training courses-

Producing thousands of research software in three languages (Persian, Arabic and- English) which can be performed in computers, tablets and cellphones and available and downloadable with eight international formats: JAVA, ANDROID, EPUB, CHM, PDF, HTML, CHM, GHB on the website

Also producing four markets named "Ghaemiyeh Book Market" with Android, IOS,- WINDOWS PHONE and WINDOWS editions

:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

:Address of the central office
Isfahan, Abdorazaq St, Haj Mohammad JafarAbadei Alley, Shahid Mohammad HasanTavakkoly Alley, Number plate ۱۲۹, first floor
Website: www.ghbook.ir
Email: Info@ghbook.ir
Central office Tel: ۰۳۱۳۴۴۹۰۱۲۵
۰۲۱ ـ Tehran Tel: ۸۸۳۱۸۷۲۲
Commerce and sale: ۰۹۱۳۲۰۰۰۱۰۹
Users' affairs: ۰۹۱۳۲۰۰۰۱۰۹

Introduction of the Center – Ghaemiyeh Digital Library